Acerca de este libro

Esta es una copia digital de un libro que, durante generaciones, se ha conservado en las estanterías de una biblioteca, hasta que Google ha decidido escanearlo como parte de un proyecto que pretende que sea posible descubrir en línea libros de todo el mundo.

Ha sobrevivido tantos años como para que los derechos de autor hayan expirado y el libro pase a ser de dominio público. El que un libro sea de dominio público significa que nunca ha estado protegido por derechos de autor, o bien que el período legal de estos derechos ya ha expirado. Es posible que una misma obra sea de dominio público en unos países y, sin embargo, no lo sea en otros. Los libros de dominio público son nuestras puertas hacia el pasado, suponen un patrimonio histórico, cultural y de conocimientos que, a menudo, resulta difícil de descubrir.

Todas las anotaciones, marcas y otras señales en los márgenes que estén presentes en el volumen original aparecerán también en este archivo como testimonio del largo viaje que el libro ha recorrido desde el editor hasta la biblioteca y, finalmente, hasta usted.

Normas de uso

Google se enorgullece de poder colaborar con distintas bibliotecas para digitalizar los materiales de dominio público a fin de hacerlos accesibles a todo el mundo. Los libros de dominio público son patrimonio de todos, nosotros somos sus humildes guardianes. No obstante, se trata de un trabajo caro. Por este motivo, y para poder ofrecer este recurso, hemos tomado medidas para evitar que se produzca un abuso por parte de terceros con fines comerciales, y hemos incluido restricciones técnicas sobre las solicitudes automatizadas.

Asimismo, le pedimos que:

+ *Haga un uso exclusivamente no comercial de estos archivos* Hemos diseñado la Búsqueda de libros de Google para el uso de particulares; como tal, le pedimos que utilice estos archivos con fines personales, y no comerciales.

+ *No envíe solicitudes automatizadas* Por favor, no envíe solicitudes automatizadas de ningún tipo al sistema de Google. Si está llevando a cabo una investigación sobre traducción automática, reconocimiento óptico de caracteres u otros campos para los que resulte útil disfrutar de acceso a una gran cantidad de texto, por favor, envíenos un mensaje. Fomentamos el uso de materiales de dominio público con estos propósitos y seguro que podremos ayudarle.

+ *Conserve la atribución* La filigrana de Google que verá en todos los archivos es fundamental para informar a los usuarios sobre este proyecto y ayudarles a encontrar materiales adicionales en la Búsqueda de libros de Google. Por favor, no la elimine.

+ *Manténgase siempre dentro de la legalidad* Sea cual sea el uso que haga de estos materiales, recuerde que es responsable de asegurarse de que todo lo que hace es legal. No dé por sentado que, por el hecho de que una obra se considere de dominio público para los usuarios de los Estados Unidos, lo será también para los usuarios de otros países. La legislación sobre derechos de autor varía de un país a otro, y no podemos facilitar información sobre si está permitido un uso específico de algún libro. Por favor, no suponga que la aparición de un libro en nuestro programa significa que se puede utilizar de igual manera en todo el mundo. La responsabilidad ante la infracción de los derechos de autor puede ser muy grave.

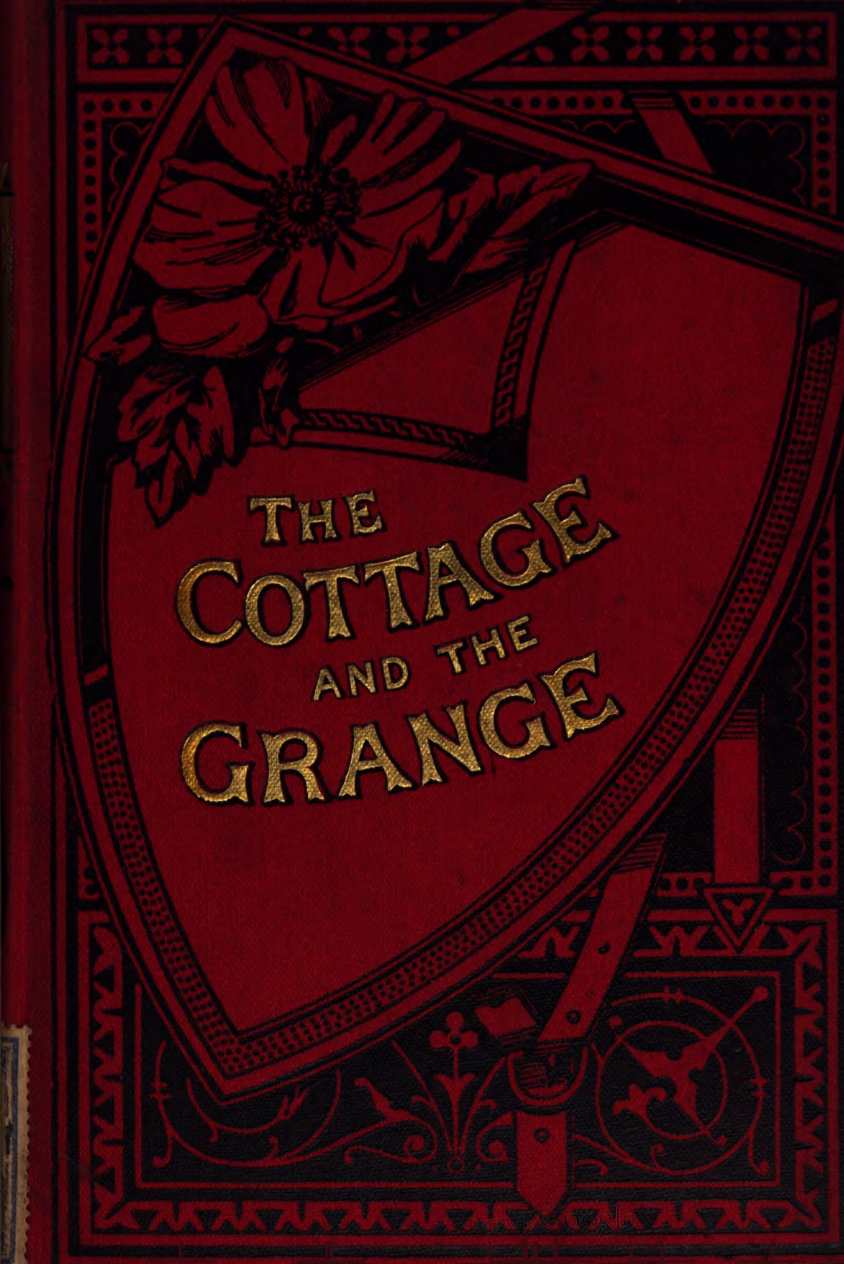
Acerca de la Búsqueda de libros de Google

El objetivo de Google consiste en organizar información procedente de todo el mundo y hacerla accesible y útil de forma universal. El programa de Búsqueda de libros de Google ayuda a los lectores a descubrir los libros de todo el mundo a la vez que ayuda a autores y editores a llegar a nuevas audiencias. Podrá realizar búsquedas en el texto completo de este libro en la web, en la página `http://books.google.com`

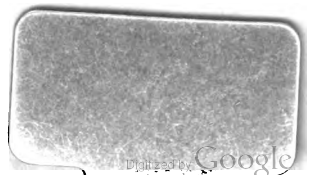
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com


THE
COTTAGE
AND THE
GRANGE

6000889127X



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MRS. FONTENORE. [*See p.* 28.

Digitized by Google

THE COTTAGE AND THE GRANGE.

BY

EVELYN EVERETT GREEN,

AUTHOR OF

"PAUL HARVARD'S CAMPAIGN," "LENORE ANNANDALE'S STORY," ETC.

"In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."—*John* xiv. 2.

London:

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

56, PATERNOSTER ROW; 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD; AND 164, PICCADILLY.

1489. f. 269.

Digitized by Google

Butler & Tanner,
The Selwood Printing Works.
Frome, and London.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE COTTAGE	7
II.	THE GRANGE	17
III.	THE VISIT	26
IV.	THE COTTAGE KITCHEN	37
V.	A SUNDAY AFTERNOON	51
VI.	A DISCOVERY	60
VII.	THE UNDERGROUND HOME	69
VIII.	CHARLEY	80
IX.	A BIRTHDAY	89
X.	THE FLOODED MINE	99
XI.	LIFE AND DEATH	113
XII.	CONCLUSION	123

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE COTTAGE AND THE GRANGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE COTTAGE.

"I'LL tell you what it is," said Jack, discontentedly, "it's just horrid to be poor!"

"It isn't so nice as being rich," answered Bessie, as she dropped her work in her lap and folded her hands together, for it was too dark now to see how to make neat stitches; "but we mustn't be cross and naughty about it, Jack, or we shall worry mamma."

"I don't want to worry mater," answered Jack, still gloomily; "but it's horrid for all that. Look

Digitized by Google

at my jacket—it's disgustingly shabby; and she says I can't have a new one to go back to Dr. Arden's after the Christmas holidays. Harold has all the new things, and I have to wear out his nasty old ones. I call it a shame!"

Jack kicked his feet against the fender, and looked thoroughly put out and cross. As he was generally a merry, light-hearted little fellow, who took the ups and downs of life with philosophic calm, this sudden outbreak of discontent was the more remarkable.

Bessie was Jack's loyal admirer and champion. She was also his *confidante* and friend even more than his elder brother. For these two were twins, and three years younger than Harold, and until lately had worked and played almost exclusively together.

"You know," continued Jack, "it was bad enough before; but now that those Fontenore people have come to The Grange it's disgusting to go about all out at elbows like this. And Harold said that the two boys were coming to Dr. Arden's for lessons next term, just as we do."

Bessie looked up with interest.

"Won't that be rather nice?"

"It might have been, if things had been as they were once; but I don't care about it now, when we ive in this horrid little cottage, and I have only disgusting old clothes to wear."

Bessie's face grew rather grave.

"Jack," she said, "don't you think that's something like false pride?"

"What?"

"Why thinking so much about being poor."

Digitized by Google

Jack made no answer, but kicked the fender rather more fiercely.

"You see," continued Bessie, thoughtfully, "it was God who took papa away to heaven, and that made us poor; and I don't think He would like us to grumble so about it."

"I don't often grumble," muttered Jack.

"No, you don't," answered Bessie, warmly; "you're a dear, good boy, and I'm awfully sorry about the old jacket and the Fontenores."

A little sympathy did Jack good. A glimmer of a smile began to twinkle over his face.

"Well, I dare say I'll soon get used to it," he answered. "One gets used to most things; but it isn't nice to come down in the world."

Bessie shook her head gravely.

"No, it isn't. I don't like living in little tiny rooms and having no nursery and only one servant, and no carriage to take mamma out. She has gone out to-day, and I don't think she was fit; but she said she must, and she isn't in yet."

"I'd go and meet her if I knew which way she'd gone," said Jack; but just at this moment a slight sound outside made them aware that the object of their solicitude had already returned, and the next minute Mrs. Howard entered the little room.

She was still a young-looking woman, tall and graceful, and with a pale sweet face that was attractive even to strangers, and very beautiful to those who knew it well. She was dressed in deep mourning, and walked languidly, as if tired by her exertions of the afternoon. Jack jumped up and installed her in the well-worn easy chair beside the fire. Bessie bustled about and lighted the

Digitized by Google

lamp, and pu the copper kettle on to boil up. The tea was already laid out upon the small square dining-table; and by the time that the little girl had removed her mother's heavy mantle and bonnet and had carried them up to the bedroom above, the kettle had boiled and Jack had made the tea, and had placed a little table beside his mother's chair so that she could rest at ease.

"Where is Harold?" asked Mrs. Howard, as the twins took their places.

"He stayed to tea at the Stannards'," answered Jack. "We went there this afternoon to borrow a book, and Harold stayed."

"Where did you go, mamma?" asked Bessie.

Mrs. Howard smiled and asked, "Where do you think?"

Both children looked up eagerly.

"Did you call on Mrs. Fontenore?"

"Yes, dears; that is just what I did do."

"Oh, go on, please, mamma; tell us all about it. What kind of a lady is she? And how many little children has she got? Did you see the pretty little girl who was in church last Sunday? And did she say anything about the boys going to Dr. Arden's?"

"My dear little girl, how can you expect me to answer all those questions at once? When you go there to tea to-morrow, you had better find out all about it from little Veronica."

Bessie clasped her hands.

"Am I going there to tea, mamma?"

"Mrs. Fontenore was kind enough to ask you all to go. She thought as we were such near neighbours it would be pleasant for us to be better

Digitized by Google

acquainted. There are three boys and little Veronica, and they want playmates as much as you do."

Bessie's eyes sparkled.

"Three boys! I only saw two in church," said Jack.

"No; one is an invalid, poor little fellow. He has hip-joint disease, and has to lie always on his back. He is the youngest of the family, and Veronica is the next, and then come Donald and Percy, the two boys who are going to Dr. Arden's till next Michaelmas at any rate."

"What kind of fellows are they?" asked Jack, with interest.

"I did not see them. I only saw little Veronica. But you will see them to-morrow, when you go."

"What a pretty name Veronica is," said Bessie. "Much prettier than Elizabeth."

Bessie's name was rather a grievance to her. She did not like it at all, and always envied little girls who boasted fanciful names such as the one she had just heard.

Mrs. Howard smiled gravely.

"Elizabeth was your father's favourite name, dear," and Bessie coloured and was silent.

"I say, mother," said Jack, "what kind of a house is The Grange? Have they big rooms, and a jolly old staircase, and places to romp and skylark in? And have the boys got ponies to ride, as we used to have once?"

Bessie looked repressively at Jack, for she did not want her mother disturbed by reminiscences of past days; but Mrs. Howard smiled as she answered,—

Digitized by Google

"Yes, Jack. The Grange is a nice large house, larger than our old home, but not unlike it in many ways; and I have no doubt that the boys have very much the same indulgences that you had when we could afford them."

"How jolly for them!" remarked Jack, with a sigh, and his face clouding again.

"You miss your pony, I am afraid, dear," said his mother; "little Brownie was such a pet."

Jack gulped down his tea with something like a choke in his voice as he answered,—

"Don't let's talk about him."

"Poor Jack!" said Mrs. Howard; "but now that you have some new friends, perhaps you may be asked to share in some rides again."

Jack did not look encouraged.

"I don't like being under obligations to new people," he said, rather grandly.

"Well, dear," said his mother, "when you were the owner of a nice pony you were glad enough to lend it sometimes to any little friend of yours; and so I cannot see why you should be too proud to accept a similar favour from another, now that positions are somewhat reversed."

But Jack's face still wore its clouded look, which his mother was not slow to observe.

"My little boy," she said, very gently, "what is the matter with you to-day?"

Jack gave another great gulp, and then out it all came again.

"It is so hateful to be so poor."

Bessie looked reproachfully at him, but Mrs. Howard, observing the look, said quietly,—

"Nay, Bessie, dear; I would rather hear all the

Digitized by Google

trouble. We are not poorer than we were last week, Jack, and you were happy enough then."

"It's those Fontenores," muttered Jack, half ashamed of himself, yet not prepared to come out of his ill-humour.

"My dear little boy, we are no worse off because The Grange has been taken at last," answered the mother, smiling.

"But it didn't seem to matter much before," said Jack, beginning slowly and half reluctantly, but waxing more vehement as he proceeded. "Everybody was poor before, you know. There are only the Stannards, and they aren't rich, and the Harringtons, who are only common sort of people, and don't count. I didn't mind their being well-to-do, because you see that made it different, and they are very glad if we will come and see them sometimes, because they know we are 'gentlefolks,' as they call it. But these Fontenores at The Grange are different. We used to be just like them, you know; and I just know Mrs. Fontenore can't hold a candle to *you;* but now they will want to patronise us and be the great people whilst we are the little ones, whilst we're as good as they any day: and I hate it!"

Mrs. Howard looked grieved as she heard this tirade, but not vexed or angry.

"Jack," she said, with a little surprise in her tone, "I never knew that you had so much false pride in your nature."

"I never did till we were poor."

"He never did till the Fontenores came," added Bessie, eagerly, "and I don't believe he means it now."

Digitized by Google

"I do," muttered Jack.

Mrs. Howard smiled a little sadly.

"Being poor and seeing other people rich does not put evil thoughts in our hearts, but brings out the evil that was there before."

"I don't see what harm it does not to want to ride other people's ponies," said Jack. "And nobody likes to be patronised."

"Wait till anybody tries to patronise you before you complain," advised his mother.

"They've asked us to tea already."

"Well, and what of that? You can ask them back."

Jack kicked the leg of the table. "Ask them *here?*" with a look of disgust round the very little room.

"Ah, Jack!" said his mother, a little sadly, "so it is all envy, after all!"

"Envy!" echoed both children in a breath; and Jack added quickly,—

"I'm sure I don't envy anybody."

"Yes, you do. You envy the Fontenores for their fine house and their horses and servants. You do not like them to think us poor, although there is no disgrace in poverty, and it is no fault of ours that we had to leave our large house and live in a little one. But tell me, are you really more unhappy now than when in the old home?"

Jack was just going to answer that of course he was, when he began to think, and really he could not honestly say that he had really been in much worse spirits latterly than in old days.

"I don't bother to think about it often," he admitted; "but of course, when I do, it's horrid."

Digitized by Google

"My dear little children," said Mrs. Howard, earnestly, "will you believe your mother when she tells you that having much or little money makes very little difference to our happiness—our real and truest happiness?"

Jack stared, and Bessie said,—

"But it's much nicer to be rich than poor."

"It is undoubtedly pleasanter, dear; but it does not greatly affect our happiness—that depends on other things than wealth."

"On what, mother?"

"On our love for those round us, our family life and interest and affection for one another; on our health, and the way in which we make use of the talents entrusted to us; and, above all, on our earnest efforts to do right in God's sight, and to live our lives to His honour and glory."

The children were silent, feeling a little awed by the extreme gentleness and earnestness of their mother's manner. They did not quite grasp the truth of her words, but they impressed themselves upon their memories.

"Do you mean, mamma," asked Bessie, "that the little Fontenores are not much happier than we are?"

Mrs. Howard could not repress a smile.

"Are you so very unhappy then, Bessie?"

Bessie coloured and laughed.

"Why, no, mamma; we are quite happy most days, but—but——"

"You think you used to be happier in a big house than in a little one?"

"I don't know about *happier;* but it was much nicer, you know."

Digitized by Google

"Just so; but happiness is the great thing, and the one about which we were talking. When you go to The Grange to-morrow you can compare your own lot with that of your new friends."

Harold's entrance at this moment interrupted the talk at this point. Harold was a handsome, dashing-looking lad, very merry and high-spirited, and full of life and health.

His entrance was the pretty sure signal for a romp, and a very merry evening ensued, and the little room rang with the confusion of happy voices.

Mrs. Howard lay back in her easy chair, smiling over the children's gambols, and thinking over the talk that had just passed between them.

Harold was much excited to hear of the proposed expedition for the morrow. A little novelty was a great event to the young Howards in the enforced quiet of their present life, and the prospect of new friends aroused a host of speculations in their minds.

"It's all very well to talk," said Jack to himself; "but it's nice to be rich, and these Fontenores must be much happier than we can be. But I don't want to be envious, so I won't think about it more than I can help."

Thought Bessie to herself,—

"When I get to know Veronica, I shall talk to her about all this, and find out what *she* thinks about it all."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

THE GRANGE.

"How cross you are, Charley!"

"I'm not—it's you!"

"I'm sure it isn't. I've done everything I can think of to please you, and you're just like a bear."

"Well, it's so horribly dull in the country, it's enough to make anybody cross. I can't think why we ever came."

Veronica sighed plaintively.

"I thought it was going to be so nice in the country, and that I should be allowed to do just as I liked; and it's all as stiff and particular, really, as it was in London. I've got just as many lessons to do as I had then; and Miss Ansty is just as prim and cross as ever she was."

"Is she?" returned Charley, with languid interest. "I always said she was an old horror."

"So she is," returned Veronica, with emphasis. "A regular old horror; but I'm used to that. It's the mean contradictoriness of her that makes me so angry. Now just listen here—so long as we were in London she always made me walk out holding her hand, and turning out my toes as stiff

Digitized by Google

as a poker, and whenever I said anything, and begged to be let off, she always said,"—and here Veronica put on a prim and ridiculous expression and manner, that showed she was a terrible little mimic,—"'No, my dear; you must remember that you are in London streets, and that you cannot run wild as if you were in the country. You must walk properly as becomes your position, and learn to comport yourself like a young lady.' Well, having had it always drummed into me that if I lived in the country I should be allowed to run wild, I expected to have done with stiff walks, and to be allowed to run about and enjoy myself; but what does she do but get fast hold of my hand as tight as ever, and say, 'No, my dear; in London it was of minor importance what you did and how you behaved, because nobody who saw you would be likely to know who you were; but here, every person you meet knows at once that you are Miss Fontenore, of The Grange, and your deportment is therefore of the utmost importance!' Did you ever in all your life hear anything so ridiculous? So there we go marching hand in hand down dirty muddy lanes without anything to look at, and most likely we don't meet more than three common people the whole time we're out. Oh, I call it just disgusting to live in the country!"

"And to know that there's nobody to come and see you from week's end to week's end," added Charley. "I can't think why on earth we ever came here."

"No, and I did think, when I heard about it, that we should have some fun at last, but I don't believe we shall."

Digitized by Google

"I know we shan't. There's no fun to have. How can there be when there are no people?"

"The garden may be nice when summer comes," said Veronica, with a sigh; "but it's only January now, and it does nothing but rain. It's all one great sop, and Miss Ansty won't even let me walk all round it. She says I shall get in such a mess."

"What would it matter if you did? You could change your clothes. There's nothing to do in a place like this. You might just as well be dressing and undressing all day long."

"Just as well," assented Veronica, "only Miss Ansty wouldn't let me. I think she thinks it isn't lady-like to get wet feet."

"It's a pity she wasn't made a cat then," remarked Charley. "I should like to change her into one, and set the dogs at her!"

"I don't believe she'd run away, if you did," answered Veronica laughing, "she'd think it wasn't lady-like."

The different suggestions as to what Miss Ansty would or would not do under the circumstances of being turned into a cat amused the two depressed children for some time.

Presently a maid came in and laid the cloth for tea—a much more substantial and luxurious meal than was at this same hour being prepared and eaten at the cottage not far away—and then a bell was rung, which after a few peals brought two bigger boys into the room, as well as a thin, sharp-faced elderly lady in spectacles, who took her seat behind the urn, and said, "Hush! hush!" when anybody spoke in a voice that she thought too

Digitized by Google

loud, or used any words which did not belong to her somewhat limited vocabulary.

The boys, however, took very little notice of these interruptions, although they evidently resented them; but Veronica always subsided when she saw the repressive spectacled eyes bent upon her.

The grumbling that had been begun by the two younger children before tea was now echoed more emphatically by the other boys.

Percy was loud in his declarations that such a dull place, with such dirty roads, and with so little to see or do, had never before existed; and it just "beat him" how his parents could have gone and fixed upon such a "beastly hole."

"Hush, hush, *hush!*" from Miss Ansty.

Percy had the air of a boy who had a vast idea of his own importance. An eldest son in a wealthy family is often apt to get exalted ideas of his own position, and Percy was certainly no exception to this rule.

Donald had the happiest face of the three boys. It was round and ruddy, and looked as if it would laugh easily and heartily; but he too was a little discontented to-night.

"There don't seem any fellows to chum with," he remarked. "We've been out and about these three blessed afternoons, and we haven't so much as clapped eyes on a single chap higher than a clodhopper. I never did see such a brute of a place in all my born days."

"Hush! hush!" said Miss Ansty.

"I'd 'hush! hush'! any amount," responded Donald, "if it would bring the beggars out of their

Digitized by Google

holes; there must be some respectable aborigines somewhere, but I'm blessed if I know where they all get to, unless they roost in the church all the week; for they're only to be seen there, it seems."

"My dear Donald," remarked Miss Ansty, severely, "I do wish you would endeavour to select your words with a little more reference to the presence of ladies. You really deteriorate day by day in a manner that is most appalling."

"Oh, bother!" was all the answer vouchsafed by Donald.

"My own opinion is," said Percy, loftily, "that there is no society at all in this place. I expect we shall have to go miles for it."

"A lady called this afternoon," remarked Veronica, trying to select her words, with a view to Miss Ansty's outraged feelings. "She had a very nice face, and I think mamma liked her. She said when she had gone that Mrs. Howard had the tone of good society about her. She told me she had a little girl at home about my age, and two boys. Mamma asked them all to tea here to-morrow."

This news was listened to with interest.

"Boys!" cried Donald; "what kind of boys?"

"I don't know. We shall see them to-morrow."

"Two, did you say?"

"I think she said two. They go to Dr. Arden's for lessons, too."

"Oh, do they? I wonder what kind of chaps they will be. I hope they will be up to snuff."

Miss Ansty sighed; but it seemed hopeless, trying to cope with the boy's slang.

"They can put us up to a wrinkle or two,

Digitized by Google

perhaps," added Donald, reflectively. "I'm sure I hope so, for really this is the very slowest place that ever was."

Percy's face looked somewhat haughty and forbidding.

"Howard, did you say, Veronica? Why, the Howards live in that ridiculous little cottage just outside the park gates, with the bay windows and handkerchief-sized lawn in front. The coachman and gardener have better houses than that. Fellows must be cads who live in such a hole."

But Véronica's head went up.

"Mrs. Howard was a perfect lady," she said, loftily. "I am convinced that her sons must be gentlemen."

"Gentlefolk don't live in bandboxes like that," muttered Percy, while Charley retorted snappishly,—

"You never think of anything but money—money—money. As if you only valued people for what they had instead of what they were. That's what I call being a thorough-going snob."

Charley was a voracious reader, and had acquired ideas, and a power of expressing them, beyond the reach of his elder brothers. When he chose he could be so very disagreeable and so difficult to put down, or even to answer, that his brothers generally considered it advisable to let him alone, and not attempt an argument.

Donald changed the subject.

"There's a lot of hunting round here—three packs of hounds meet at different places in the neighbourhood. When we've got more used to riding, we'll have fine sport."

Percy's face still looked dark and angry.

Digitized by Google

"It was such a shame we were never taught to ride in London. A fellow looks such a fool at my age not knowing how to stick on a horse. I hate to see all the stable chaps grin when I get up, and I don't feel a bit safe in the saddle yet. It's too bad. I wouldn't go to the meet for anything now, and we might have had lots of fun that way."

Veronica was here called away to be dressed to go down to dessert. The boys had shortly to go to make their preparations, and Charley was left alone in the schoolroom.

When Veronica came back in her pink silk frock, satin shoes, looking a very grand young lady indeed, she found Charley in a brown study.

"Vera," he said, and heaved a sigh of dissatisfaction, "don't you wish we lived in a little cottage, where we could just do as we liked?"

"Oh yes!" answered Veronica, eagerly kneeling on the rug and rubbing her hands together to warm them. "I always did think it would be delicious to be poor, and have a dear little cottage to live in, and be able to run into the kitchen and help with the dinner—I do *love* cooking—whenever the servant was busy, and have no horrid Miss Ansty to worry one's life out; but do things for oneself, and learn all kinds of nice things, like making cakes, and scrubbing floors, and milking cows, and having a dairy. Then we should always live in one nice cosy room, and have no horrid dessert every night, and you could have your sofa always in the kitchen and see me cook your dinner. Charley, when we grow up we'll live together and just do like that. I think it would be just delicious."

"So do I," answered Charley. "It's so dull

Digitized by Google

when you're at lessons, or down at dessert, or out for walks. If we had a cottage you wouldn't have to go walks, would you ?"

"Oh no, I should be much too busy. I should have a little garden and grow potatoes and cabbages and peas, and I should dig there instead of going walks; and when we'd sold enough butter and milk and vegetables, I'd buy a nice little donkey, like one I saw in a field the other day, and I'd drive you out sometimes in your invalid chair, and we'd have lovely times."

"I wish we could begin now," said Charley, with a sigh. "I wish papa would make me an allowance—sometimes sons have an allowance, you know—and then we would look out for a cottage directly."

"I know a dear little cottage with a thatched roof, down the lane here, that would just do, *such* a duck of a cottage, with only one room and a kitchen and a funny little window under the roof—I suppose it's an attic up there. I was thinking only to-day how nice it would be to live there," and Veronica looked and spoke somewhat sadly; "but then mamma would never let me go. She would say it was not becoming to my position; and Miss Ansty would say it was not lady-like. Charley, don't you wish grandpapa had not made all that money and got so rich? I think if it hadn't been for that we should be living in a dear little pokey house now, and I should be helping to cook the dinners."

"Yes," answered Charley, rather gloomily, "and I believe our name would be Fountain, not Fontenore. I know it is so in some old books down-

Digitized by Google

stairs. I believe mamma changed the name to make it sound grander, or something. I call it all humbug, and I wish we were nice, comfortable, homely people who didn't try to be so very grand."

"It would be much, much nicer," said Veronica, shaking her head wisely; "but I suppose it's too nice ever to come true. I must go now, Charley, or they will scold; but I'll come back as soon as I can, and then we'll play a little while at living in a cottage before we go to bed."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

THE VISIT.

THE next afternoon saw the meeting between the young inmates of Cottage and Grange. Harold and Jack, with Bessie between them, walked rather solemnly up the long avenue of lime trees that led to the great house, and were ushered, upon their arrival, with a good deal of ceremony into the large schoolroom upstairs.

Veronica received them with something of a grown-up air, copied from her mother, and introduced them to her brothers.

Percy was rather stiff, not being quite convinced whether boys from so small a house could be worthy of his notice. Donald grinned at Jack in a friendly fashion, but did not seem to have much to say, and Charley was suffering from an attack of shyness.

Harold, however, was quite at his ease, and talked with a freedom that Percy was inclined to resent at first; but Donald listened with all his ears, beginning to feel a respect for any boy who seemed as familiar as Harold did with country ways and topics.

Digitized by Google

"Do you ever go out riding?" asked Percy, as they drew round the tea-table.

"Not here," answered Harold; "we haven't any horses; but where we lived before we often did. Our father used to ride regularly, and we often went with him, Jack and I."

"It was jolly!" cried Jack, forgetting his shabby jacket, and waking into enthusiasm.

"Tell us about it!" urged Donald; and by the time some of their old life had been described, the boys felt they had made a distinct advance in intimacy.

Miss Ansty had gone out this evening, to the intense joy of Veronica, so that the talk went on much more fluently than in her presence, and for a time all seemed to go well; but after tea came a summons to the drawing-room, and then all the faces clouded over in a moment.

"Oh, botheration!" cried Donald.

"It will just waste all the time in palaver, and spoil everything," grumbled Percy; and Veronica shrugged her shoulders, and whispered to Bessie,—

"We do so hate going downstairs."

"Why?" asked Bessie, opening her eyes.

"Oh, you know mamma is there, and papa too, sometimes, and it is so dull. I do hope they won't keep us long."

Bessie made no reply, not knowing what to say, and slowly and reluctantly the whole party descended, with the exception of Charley, who, of course, was tied to his sofa.

The way in which The Grange was furnished and decorated was sufficiently magnificent to impress

Digitized by Google

the little Howards with a sense of grandeur to which they had never been accustomed, even in the days when they had lived in a large house, and had known what it was to be surrounded with luxuries.

Harold thought it looked a little ostentatious, and Jack felt the shabbiness of his jacket sleeves a good deal more painfully, whilst Bessie slipped her hand into Veronica's, and said to herself that she was rather glad she did not live in a house like this.

The drawing-room was quite a palatial apartment, and the carpet was so soft that the children's feet sank noiselessly into it as they moved across the room.

Mrs. Fontenore was reclining on a couch beside the fire, wrapped in velvet and fur, for she was something of an invalid, or thought herself so, and felt the cold of a country house very much.

She greeted the children languidly, just asking their names and ages, and inquiring after their mother, and then she closed her eyes and seemed to have no more to say.

"You can show your little friends the coin cabinet," she said, "or anything else in the room. Do not make a noise."

Jack and Bessie exchanged glances. What a very odd sort of mother this pretty lady was! Why, Veronica never even kissed her when she came in, and only looked stiff and uncomfortable.

"My dear child, what a figure you are!" said Mrs. Fontenore, looking vexed and irritable. "How

Digitized by Google

could you come down in such a frock? Go upstairs and get it changed directly."

It was a very nice frock, Bessie thought, much finer than her own, and she felt rather uncomfortable as she heard these words.

Veronica pouted, and answered pertly,—

"I'm sure it's quite good enough for the country, mamma."

"Go and change it instantly," answered Mrs. Fontenore, with undoubted temper in her tone; "and learn two verses of French poetry before you go to bed to-night."

Veronica flounced out of the room in a rage, and Bessie's face was scarlet; but Mrs. Fontenore only yawned again, and seemed in no wise disturbed. Perhaps she was used to this sort of thing, but it did not seem very nice to Bessie.

"Mamma," said Donald, "can we go to the stables, and look at the horses?"

"No; it's too dark now."

"But we can have a lantern. Coachman and the grooms will all be about still."

"Oh, I can't have you going there now. You'll smell of the stable when you come down to dessert."

"Oh no, we shan't. Do let us go."

"You'll set the house on fire then."

"No, we shan't. Come along, you fellows. There's nothing else to do."

"Your father won't like it," went on Mrs. Fontenore, feebly.

"He won't know," called back Donald. "He's not in yet."

Digitized by Google

"Well, I don't wish you to go."

But the boys were already outside the door, and only Jack heard the last words, and he turned reluctantly back.

Bessie's look of gratitude was a reward for this act of renunciation.

"Those boys never do mind a word I say," remarked Mrs. Fontenore, as if that were a matter of course. "I suppose you are afraid of horses?" she added, looking at Jack.

He swallowed his indignation as well as he could, and answered,—

"No, I am very fond of them; but I thought you did not wish us to go."

"Oh, I never expect to be obeyed. My children are quite too much for me."

Bessie and Jack exchanged glances, and said nothing.

Veronica came back in a minute or two, and very soon afterwards a tall, stern-looking man, at sight of whom the child shrank a little into the background.

He looked at the two strange children, but did not speak to them, and turning to his wife, asked sternly,—

"Where are the boys?"

"They were here just now. I suppose they've strayed away somewhere."

"I suppose they are in the stables. I saw lights there as I came through the park. I'll teach them to put my rules at defiance."

His face looked so dark and stern that Bessie was quite frightened—wished she had never come to such a dreadful house. She was very thank-

Digitized by Google

ful when Veronica plucked up courage to ask if they might go back to Charley, and gave a little gasp of relief when she found herself safe outside the door. There was something fairly bewildering to her in the state of antagonism and anarchy that seemed to rule in this house that was full of so much outward grandeur and order.

"It's always like that when we go to the drawing-room," pouted Veronica. "Papa and mamma are so cross and disagreeable."

"Oh, hush, Veronica!" cried Bessie.

But Veronica did not seem conscious of having said anything shocking.

"Now there will be a 'row,' as the boys call it, and Percy will be cross for all the rest of the day. It is so stupid of the boys to break rules; papa always does find out."

"But it would be worse if he didn't," asserted Jack, who was growing more and more astonished at all he saw and heard. "It would be deceiving then."

Veronica laughed.

"Don't talk like a good little boy in a story-book. You never break rules, do you?"

"Yes, I do; but I always tell afterwards."

"Well you must be pretty silly, then."

Veronica spoke quite good-temperedly, but Bessie fancied she did not believe Jack.

"He always does tell," she said, quickly. "Mamma always says she can trust Jack. He often forgets, but he always speaks the truth."

"Ah, well, that may be different," returned Veronica, equably. "Papa never does trust any-

Digitized by Google

body, so it's no good telling; it wouldn't do any good; and as for mamma, she never cares for anything so long as we look fine and don't make too much noise. Miss Ansty does all *my* scolding—and enough I get, too!"

"Who is Miss Ansty?"

"My governess. She is very cross. Charley thinks she is like a cat. I don't like her at all. Do you like your governess?"

"I don't have one. Mamma teaches me."

"Your mamma?"

"Yes, every day. I like my lessons most days, all but sums and needle-work."

"I hate mine; but Charley likes them, and I have to learn to keep up with him. He only does lessons when he likes, because he's often ill; but he's so clever, and reads such a lot, that he gets on much faster than I do. But he's two years younger, so I don't mean him to pass me. It would be too humiliating."

And here they reached the schoolroom, and so this talk was broken off.

Charley was told of the visit to the stables, and said,—

"Serve them right!" when he heard of the "row" that hung over his brothers.

"Do you like them to be in disgrace?" asked Jack, in some surprise; and Charley looked as if he did, but only answered,—

"I don't care; but I think it just serves Percy right. He's such a mighty fine gentleman, nothing's good enough for him, and it takes the conceit out of him to be well cuffed sometimes."

Digitized by Google

"Does your father lick them when they're naughty?" asked Jack, with interest.

"Yes, generally. I dare say he'll box their ears well for them to-day. It's one good thing of being lame; I get out of going downstairs and getting into all the bothers."

"But you'd like to go down to your mother, wouldn't you?" questioned Bessie, "or does she come up and sit with you instead?"

"Most days she comes in for a minute, and papa comes just now and again when he thinks of it," answered Charley, not without bitterness, although he seemed to speak lightly.

"Well!" exclaimed Bessie, drawing a deep breath, "it's the oddest thing I ever knew!"

"What?"

"Why, the way you go on here. I don't know how to explain it, but I think you'd understand if you knew my mamma."

"Your mamma was nice!" said Veronica, resting her chin on her hand. "She wasn't a bit like ours."

"No, indeed," breathed Bessie, softly; but she did not mean to be overheard, and neither of her hearers made any reply. Indeed, there was hardly time, for the door was flung open, and the three elder boys entered noisily, with flushed faces and angry looks.

Harold looked more astonished than angry, but Percy was in a towering passion, and even merry-faced Donald looked dark.

I should not like to repeat the fierce words and disrespectful speeches that were bandied about between the young Fontenores. Percy used lan-

Digitized by Google

guage about his father which made the Howards sorry they had ever come. They felt, without being able to say it, that, however stern a father might be, even to the verge of harshness or injustice, no son ought to so forget himself as Percy did then.

Charley's bitter speeches were not much pleasanter to hear, and in the discussion of their own fancied wrongs the guests were almost forgotten.

"I think we must be going," said Harold, at length, to Bessie's great relief; and nobody opposed their departure. The harmony of the visit had been quite spoiled, and all were anxious to be gone.

Veronica looked somewhat downcast as she helped Bessie into her things.

"Everything always does go wrong here," she said, with a great sigh. "I knew how it would be directly we went downstairs. I was convinced something would happen. I don't believe you've enjoyed yourself a bit."

Bessie was too truthful to say that she had; but, as she was somewhat drawn to Veronica, she answered, brightly,—

"Oh, well, never mind; boys will be vexed sometimes. You must come to see me on any half-holiday some time, and we'll have a nice time with mamma, and you shall see my cat and my tame bullfinch, and we'll make our own tea, and toast cakes by the fire, and pretend we live in the woods. Jack's a first-rate boy for making believe things."

Veronica clasped her hands in ecstasy at this

Digitized by Google

realization of her ideal; but there was not time to say more, for Bessie had to hurry down to her brothers.

"Well," said Harold, when they were at a safe distance from the house, "I do think that's about the most abominable visit I ever paid in my life."

"I never saw such people," added Jack. "They all seem just to hate each other."

"No, not quite that," put in Bessie; "but they all just seem at sixes and sevens. Nobody cares about anybody else, and they don't like being with their father or mother, and they don't care about pleasing them. I can't make it out one bit."

"That Donald is not a bad fellow, on the whole," said Harold, after a pause; "but I can't stand the other chap. I know I shall thrash him one of these days. He said your jacket looked as if it came out of the rag-bag, Jack."

Jack flushed scarlet, and Bessie, knowing it was a tender point, exclaimed indignantly,—

"How rude!"

And then they walked home in silence.

Mrs. Howard was surprised at their early return, and their silence on the subject of their visit. It was evident they had not greatly enjoyed it; and when she went into Jack's little room that night, as she always did before going to bed, she was not much surprised when he suddenly sat up and clasped her round the neck.

"Mother," he said, "I'll never mind about being

Digitized by Google

poor again—not if I never have a new jacket so long as I live!"

He did not explain his words, but she knew he had learnt a lesson at The Grange that day.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

THE COTTAGE KITCHEN.

THE intimacy between the children of The Cottage and The Grange, which commenced so unpropitiously, as recorded in the previous chapter, did not make any great strides during the few following weeks.

When the holidays ended, and the young Fontenores and Howards met daily to study at the Rectory, they grew, of course, to know one another pretty well, and Harold and Donald struck up a friendship which grew and throve apace; but Percy held aloof, and treated the Howards with a sort of contemptuous patronage that Jack resented intensely,—although easy-going Harold did not trouble his head about it,—and he never would accompany his elder brother to The Grange, or take a share in any pursuit that would bring him much into contact with Percy.

He said little about his feelings; but none the less did it gall and chafe him to see how much was made of the two young Fontenores because they lived in the largest house of the place, whilst the inhabitants of The Cottage were almost passed over as people of no consequence at all.

Digitized by Google

An insight into life at The Grange had cured Jack of any personal feeling of envy—he would not have changed places with any of those boys for all the world; but one of life's hardest lessons is not learnt all at once, and when the memory of the unpleasantness of that visit had a little worn off, Jack did sometimes sigh over his frayed jackets, scanty pocket-money, and lost pony.

But what the boy felt even more than this was the suspicion that his mother was slighted by those great people, just because she lived in a cottage. Mrs. Fontenore did not return her call in person, but only sent cards, with an apology about her weak health and being able to go out so little; but as she had her carriages and horses, and was able to call on the rich people round, Jack was not appeased by this excuse.

Then Veronica had never been to see Bessie, as she had promised, and they had never been asked to The Grange again; and altogether Jack felt as if they were held very cheap by these great people, and, as he once said to Bessie, "it put his monkey up."

What Jack's "monkey" was, was one of Bessie's puzzles, but she knew that when this creature was "up," Jack was not to be trifled with, so she avoided the subject of the Fontenores, and tried not to think about the faithless little Veronica.

Well, just when matters stood in this way, came one of those occasional days which Jack and Bessie always liked, when the servant went for a day's holiday to see her old mother, and the housework and cooking were done by the family themselves.

Digitized by Google

Jack and Harold had a half-holiday every Saturday, so that Jack was at home to help Bessie in her congenial labours of cake-making. Harold had gone somewhere with Donald; and after the early dinner Mrs. Howard had gone out to pay a few calls, telling Jack and Bessie to keep house together, and do their cooking, and get everything ready for tea by the time she came home.

This was just what suited the two children. The kitchen at The Cottage was really the nicest room in the house, and the largest. The house, when it was built, had not been meant for "gentlefolks" to live in, but for the class of people who for the most part make a living room of the kitchen, and so this kitchen ran the whole way along the back of the house, and was flagged with red tiles, and had a good range, a good dresser, and a nice large table, and a variety of good deep cupboards to hold all the household stores.

Bessie and Jack were very fond of the kitchen, and as the servant was a good-natured girl, and as they had no nursery of their own, they used to play in it a good deal, and were always delighted to try their hands at a little amateur cookery. Indeed, Bessie was a very clever little cook already, and Jack was a good hand at making Welsh rabbit, or toasting sausages, or anything that did not require any great skill or foresight; and the two were very hard at work this afternoon over their respective tasks—so hard that they did not notice the sudden darkening of the sky, and were surprised when the rain began to fall all at once in torrents.

It had been bright and fine when their mother

Digitized by Google

had started, and Bessie anxiously looked at the clock, and then said, with an air of satisfaction,—

"She will have got to Mrs. Stapleton's by this time, and will be sure to stay till the shower is over. I think it will only be a shower, for it came on so very suddenly and strongly."

"Hallo!" cried Jack, "there's somebody banging at the front door," and off he rushed to open it.

Bessie followed to see who could be there, and to her great surprise she saw Veronica, flushed with running, and a panting maid, who had just pushed Charley's wheel couch into the narrow hall.

"It did so *pour* just as we were passing your gate," cried Veronica, "and we had no umbrella, for it was quite sunny when we started; and Charley gets so ill if he gets a chill, so I told Martha to come straight in here. I *hope* you don't mind; but it is quite a charity to take us in."

"Oh, do come into the kitchen, we've a lovely fire there, for we've been cooking; and there's nobody at home but us, and your frock's quite wet, and Charley looks cold!" cried Bessie, all in a breath.

"I am precious cold," answered Charley, who had caught a glimpse of the ruddy glow of the fire through the open kitchen door; "wheel me in there, Martha, it looks jolly."

The girl obeyed, and Charley's couch was soon standing before the glowing range. The wet rug was taken off, and it was ascertained that the damp had not penetrated farther; but the boy was chilled by the sudden fall in the temperature caused by the rain, and was pleased to be near so bright a fire.

Digitized by Google

A whispered colloquy had taken place between Bessie and Veronica, who now turned round to Martha, and said in her most grown-up way,—

"We intend remaining here a short time, Martha. Mr. Charles must get thoroughly warmed before he ventures out again. Miss Howard will lend you an umbrella, and when the worst of the rain is over, you had better go home to tell your mistress what is detaining us. If she does not object, we should like to remain here till five o'clock, and have some tea, so do not come back for us earlier if you can help it. I had better have my ulster if we are returning late."

So Martha decamped under a large umbrella as soon as the fury of the gust began to abate, good-naturedly promising to do her best to get "the missus" to let them stop where they were for a bit.

As Martha disappeared, so also did all Veronica's grandeur; she made a little skip and clasped her hands in ecstasy.

"Now I do call this just *scrumptious!*"

Bessie was not quite sure what that might be; but there was no mistaking the expression of Veronica's face; it spoke of unmitigated delight.

"Are you really here all by yourselves in this lovely kitchen?" asked she. "Charley, isn't this just like what we talk about? Are you cooking?" she added, eagerly looking at Bessie's great white apron and turned-up sleeves.

"I've made some little buns, and they're in the oven now. Jack, just put the kettle on, and we'll make some early tea for ourselves, for I'm sure Mrs. Stapleton will keep mamma to tea as it's so

Digitized by Google

wet. Would you like to stay here, or to go into the dining-room?"

"Oh, to stay here!" cried both children in a breath.

Jack put on the kettle and then came and sat down by Charley. Bessie was giving Veronica a lesson in cake-making, and very much engrossed were both little girls with their fascinating occupation.

Charley's big brown eyes looked a little sad, Jack thought, and wondered why.

"You're very happy, aren't you?" he asked, with some abruptness.

Jack laughed at the question.

"Why, yes, I suppose so. We have very good times often, Bess and I. Most people do, I suppose, more or less, don't they?"

"I don't know," answered Charley, still with a melancholy inflection in his voice. "I don't think we ever do."

Jack opened his eyes wide.

"Not nice cosy times like you have," pursued the lame boy, glancing round the fire-lit kitchen and then letting his gaze rest upon Bessie's bright face. "We never have anything like this."

"This!" echoed Jack. "Why, we're only messing about with a little cooking because Jane is out. You could make cakes in your schoolroom if you liked, and bake them on the hob."

But Charley shook his head.

"It's not the cakes or the cooking exactly," he said, slowly.

"What then?"

"I don't know," was the wistful answer, and the

Digitized by Google

liquid dark eyes looked straight at the puzzled Jack.

"Well, I don't, I'm sure," answered he. "I should have thought The Grange was a jolly house to live in. When we had a big house like that, we just did have good times!"

"Did you have a big house once?"

"Oh yes, always till father died, a year ago. We've not lived here long. When we first came I just felt as if I couldn't breathe!"

"You didn't like it?"

Jack's answer was rather gruff.

"I suppose nobody likes being poor when they're not used to it."

"Are you poor now?"

Jack eyed his jacket askance, but answered boldly,—

"Yes, quite poor. I'm not a bit ashamed of it; and when I'm a man I'll get rich, and make a lovely home for mother and Bessie."

"What will you be?"

"I don't know yet exactly. Perhaps I'll be an engineer, like father, or else I'll be a barrister, and get to be a judge soon, or a doctor, and have heaps of grand people coming in their carriages to see me every day; but any way I mean to get on, for I won't let mother live all her life in this horrid little house."

"Don't call it horrid," said Charley.

"Why not?"

"Because it's home."

"It's my home now," said Jack, rather surprised at the argument; "but I'll have another some day."

Digitized by Google

Charley was staring into the fire. By-and-by he looked up and said,—

"Where one lives is not always home."

"But it is," asserted Jack, manfully.

"No, it isn't. Some people never do have any home—they only have houses to live in. I've lived in a lot of houses, but I've never had a home yet."

"Well," said Jack, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"No," answered Charley; "I don't suppose you do."

The little girls, who had drawn one batch of little cakes out of the oven and had put in another, were at leisure now to join in the talk, and had overheard the last few sentences.

"I know what Charley means," said Veronica. "He means that it is always so horrid at home—and so it is."

Bessie opened her eyes wide.

"The Grange is such a lovely house."

"Oh, the house is all right enough; but you didn't enjoy yourself when you came to us."

Bessie was silent.

"Well, it's always like that—only worse often, because of Miss Ansty. I don't know why it is so horrid—but it always is."

The children were silent, puzzling their heads over the matter; but none of them were ready with a solution of the puzzle.

Jack began to lay the cloth and put out the tea-things, and Veronica questioned Bessie as to their mode of daily life.

"We breakfast at eight," began the little girl,

Digitized by Google

"at least prayers are at eight, and then breakfast."

"Prayers?"

"Yes, family prayers."

"Oh, I know!" answered Veronica, as if enlightened. "I've heard of that; but we don't have any."

"No prayers!"

"No. Papa and mamma don't care for that sort of thing; they say it doesn't mean anything."

Bessie looked much aghast.

"But—but—you say your own prayers every day, don't you?"

"I did when I was quite little; but I don't often now. It doesn't seem any good."

Bessie was so astonished that she did not know what to say.

"Miss Ansty gives me a Bible lesson some days; but it's awfully dull. We're not religious, you know," said Veronica, speaking again in her grown-up way. "I've heard papa say that religion is going to be quite exploded soon."

"Oh!" cried Bessie, in a tone of such indignant astonishment that both her hearers turned to look at her in surprise. They could not understand what disturbed her so much.

Jack, who had put the finishing touches to the tea-table, now turned round and said,—

"I think I understand now why The Grange is only a house and not a home."

Then his face got suddenly red, and he would not explain his words; but Bessie thought she partly understood, although the other two did not.

Digitized by Google

So the four little friends drew round the big deal table, Charley's couch being wheeled alongside, and Bessie taking the tea-pot and doing the honours.

It was a very merry meal, merrier than any that the little Fontenores had partaken of in their lives before. Jack and Bessie bubbled over with merriment and good humour, and their guests could not but fall in with the spirit of the thing.

When the fun was at its height, the door was softly opened, and a glad shout at once arose of,—

"Mother! Mother!"

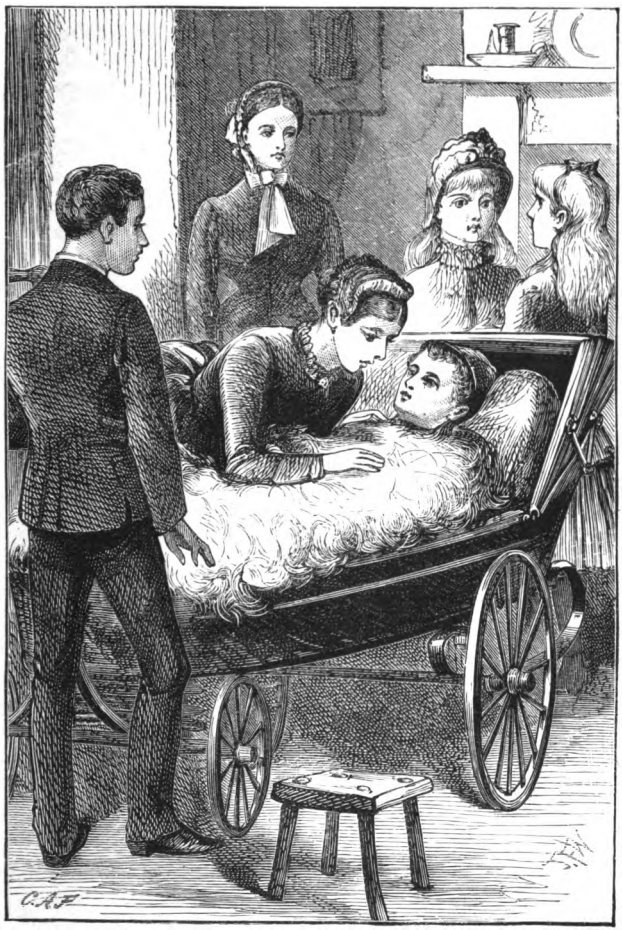
Mrs. Howard was pounced upon and dragged in by two sturdy pairs of arms, placed in a chair at the table, and gabbled at in such a fashion that nothing but long practice could have enabled her to make out what was said.

She seemed, however, to grasp without effort all that was said, spoke kindly and sweetly to the two little visitors, arranged Charley's pillows more comfortably for him, and smoothed his hair with tender touch, and then sat down to join the merry tea-party.

At first Veronica was inclined to be very silent, as a matter of course, when any grown-up person was in the room; but she soon found that Mrs. Howard's presence was no fetter to her little daughter's chatter, and soon she joined in too, rather stiffly and primly at first, but afterwards gaily and freely.

As for Charley, he said little, but kept his soft sad eyes fixed almost immovably on Mrs. Howard's pale, sweet face. That soft touch and tender smile had been a sort of revelation to him, and had

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

filled his little heart with a sort of yearning quite unknown to it before.

When Martha came back, as she shortly did, it was Mrs. Howard who carefully wrapped the little invalid up against all danger of a wetting, and she kissed the white face very tenderly and stroked the soft hair again, saying softly,—

"Does your leg give you much pain often, dear?"

"Pretty often, especially when I have to wear the weight on it."

"That is to make you better, I suppose," said Jack. "So I wouldn't mind if I were you."

"I don't believe I shall ever be better," answered Charley, quietly.

Mrs. Howard bent over him to kiss him, and, as she did so, she whispered,—

"That is as God wills it, my darling. What you have to do is to be patient, and bear the little cross He has sent you, for the dear Lord Jesus' sake."

The dark eyes were fixed wistfully upon her face.

"May I come again to see you, please?" he asked.

"As often as ever you like, dear."

"Will you ask my mamma to let me?"

"Yes, Charley; but you can ask her yourself, too, you know."

"I don't think she would trouble to give me leave if I did; she would say she would see, and then go away and forget all about it. If you asked, it might be different."

"And ask for me, too, please," pleaded Veronica, slipping a confiding little hand into Mrs. Howard's; "I do so like coming here."

Digitized by Google

But Martha now hurried her young charges away, fearful of being beyond the time allowed. Some warm kisses were exchanged, and promises made, and the little guests took their departure.

Mrs. Howard sighed softly as she turned away from the open door, and Bessie wondered why her face looked pitiful and sad.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

A SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

SUNDAY was always a happy day at The Cottage. In the morning was the pleasant little walk to church across the fields, or by the road, according to weather; then the mid-day meal, which all enjoyed together on that day; and then, what the children valued most of all, a long talk with their mother, in which her whole time and attention was devoted to them, and they could speak to her freely of everything that lay upon their minds or consciences, as well as discuss anything that had happened in the previous week, and seek counsel for the one that was to come.

On this particular Sunday it was only Bessie and Jack who seated themselves at their mother's feet for the usual chat. Donald Fontenore had called to ask Harold to go to afternoon service with him, and the two had departed together.

Mrs. Howard was a wise as well as a good woman. She did not overdo her children with religious teaching. This Sunday afternoon talk never took the outward form of a lesson, and the little ones did not even know till long afterwards how much they learnt at these times. There was

Digitized by Google

no regular bringing out of Bibles or saying of texts then, although very often some point of discussion would arise, which made the children of their own accord rush off for their Bibles, to investigate more thoroughly what they might wish to know.

On this particular Sunday the visit paid by Charley and Veronica to The Cottage was first discussed, and then Jack told his mother what the little boy had said about houses and homes.

"But, mother," concluded Jack, eagerly, "the place where we live *is* home, isn't it?"

Mrs. Howard smiled thoughtfully.

"In the ordinary acceptation of the word, yes; and yet little Charley is not altogether wrong in the view he took of the matter."

"Please explain, mamma," said Bessie; "he said he'd never had a home, and he has had several, really."

"Several houses, but no home," added Jack; "that's what he said."

"Poor little Charley!" breathed Mrs. Howard, softly; and after a pause, she added, "my darlings, this is what I think about it,—our real, beautiful, everlasting home is not here at all. It is not made by us, for no man could design or make it; and yet we know that it is waiting for us somewhere, and that One who loves us has prepared it for us, and will receive us into it, in His good time. But although no one on earth can fully realize what that home will be like, still we do know a little—a very little about it; and I think that just so much as we try to make our little homes here like the beautiful home above, so much shall we find

Digitized by Google

them happy, home-like places, worthy of the sweet name of home."

The children looked at her earnestly.

"You mean heaven by that home, don't you, mamma? But we can't make our houses like that, can we?"

"My little girl," answered Mrs. Howard, softly, "we can try. We know that here we can never attain what we earnestly strive after; but is that any reason against trying? When we pray, day by day, for grace to follow in Jesus Christ's footprints, and make of Him our Guide and Pattern, do we not know how grievously we shall fall short of the mark? Yet do we not go on, trying and trying, even as He bid us try, knowing that each effort brings us nearer to Him? When you have a copy set you, or a drawing to do, do you expect to make yours in every respect like the original? But is that any reason against doing your very best? Do you think you would do any better by having a more imperfect copy set before you? Would that be any help?"

"I don't think so," answered Bessie, shaking her head. "I like to try and copy the very best."

"So do I, dearest," answered her mother, gently; "and we know that our Heavenly Father knows that this is the best for us, by the Pattern He sent us, on whom to model our own lives."

"You mean Jesus, don't you?" asked Jack, reverently; and then, after a pause, he looked up, his brown eyes shining with intelligence, and asked, —"Mother, wasn't there a time once, when men taught the people that it would do if they tried to imitate very good men—saints, martyrs, and

Digitized by Google

Fathers—instead of Jesus? Didn't they try to make them believe that God was too far above them to be talked to direct, or imitated, and that some sort of a go-between was wanted?"

"Well, something very like that, dear," answered Mrs. Howard. "A good deal of error of that sort has crept into Christianity at one time or another."

"But it does not answer, does it?" asked Jack.

"No, dear; it never answers. Nothing can answer that puts the traditions of men in place of the law of God. God has never raised up a barrier between Himself and His children; what He did was to send His only begotten Son into the world to die for our sins. The words of that Son are, 'Come unto Me.' After that we need not try to find any mediator between us and God; for Jesus Christ is the one Mediator and Redeemer."

"Yes, yes!" answered Jack, eagerly. "I know that; I am quite sure of it, mother."

She smiled at him as only a mother can smile. Such assurances as these were very sweet.

"But about the homes, mamma?" urged Bessie. "I don't see how we can make our homes like heaven."

"But don't you see how we can try?" asked Mrs. Howard.

Bessie wrinkled up her forehead into rows of little puckers, and shook her head.

"Heaven is so beautiful," she said; "all gold and crystal and pearl. Our homes could never be like that."

Mrs. Howard smiled a little.

Digitized by Google

"My darling," she said, "suppose a very rich man were to build a most lovely palace with all the wonderful precious stones, crystal and gold, that he could purchase for money, do you think that his house would be like heaven?"

"Not unless he kept sin out," said Jack, quickly "Why, he might do every kind of wickedness in his palace, and make it more like hell than heaven."

"So he might," responded Bessie. "I never thought of that. So that wouldn't do."

Then both children looked at their mother for further information. She smiled, and asked,—

"Do you think that it is the gold and the pearl that make heaven a happy place?"

"Well, no, not exactly," answered Jack, thoughtfully, trying to recall some half-forgotten words. "Isn't it because God's throne is there, and the Lamb that was slain? It's in Revelation, isn't it? —the city where nothing that defileth can enter, because God is there; isn't that it?"

"Yes, my dear little boy; you are getting to it now. It is not the gold or the precious stones that make heaven such a happy place; but it is the presence of God there that makes it what it is. No sin can enter there, for God fills it and keeps it holy, and God is love."

Both children were looking fixedly at their mother, listening to every word.

"And so, you see," said Mrs. Howard, after a pause, "that it is God and love that make our great home such a happy place."

"I see," said Bessie; "but then what about our little homes here?"

Digitized by Google

"I know what you mean," cried Jack, with sudden eagerness; "you mean that it's loving God and one another that makes home happy. Why, of course it is, though I never thought of it before. Don't you see, Bessie, that we're happy enough in this little bit of a home because we're fond of one another, and we've got mother to love, and mother is so good, and helps us to love God, and try to be like Him. And up at The Grange, where they don't much care for one another, and never say their prayers, or learn anything about God, they're not happy a bit, and it's not a home at all, but only a house."

Bessie was much struck by Jack's clever arguments, and the quick way he had grasped the matter.

"Why, yes, of course that's it," she answered. "Do you know, mamma, it's so dreadful, Veronica doesn't even say her prayers, and I don't think they know any of the things you are always teaching us. Isn't it very sad?"

"Yes, dear, very sad. Perhaps——"

"Perhaps we could teach them. Look here, Bessie, I'm sure Charley would like to know what we've found out about houses and homes. He would so like to have a home like ours, mother."

Mrs. Howard's face was very gentle and tender.

"Poor little boy!" she said, softly, thinking of the pinched white face and wistful eyes that she had seen a few days before.

"I'll tell you what I *can* do," cried Jack, with sudden energy. "I can tell him about the great home that is made for us all,"—then, as suddenly

Digitized by Google

stopping, he turned to his mother and asked in a lower voice—"Mother, do you think Charley is going to die?"

"Why do you ask, dear?"

"Because he told me so himself, and because Donald told Harold that the doctor had said so—at least he thought he had."

"The doctor is not very likely to have said so, except to his parents, perhaps; but poor little Charley does look very ill."

"And I don't suppose he knows anything about the beautiful home in heaven," almost sobbed Bessie.

"I can teach him about that—at least I can try," said Jack, with more than his usual gravity; and he rose and fetched his little Bible from the shelf. "Mother, where does that verse come about Jesus preparing places for us in His Father's house?"

Mrs. Howard told him chapter and verse, and Jack read the words aloud.

"In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

There was a pause as he finished reading, and then Bessie said,—

"I should think he would like to know that."

"Yes!" answered Jack, thoughtfully; "he'll see, perhaps, that it doesn't matter so much what one's own house is like, if only we can get at last into the home Jesus has prepared. Why, mother," he

Digitized by Google

added, with a sudden smile, "it seems as if I wanted that lesson as much as he."

"Will Charley know the way to get to heaven?" asked Bessie, in a whisper.

"The way!" echoed Jack, hesitating, and looking at his mother. "Why, Jesus is the Way Himself, isn't He? It's enough to love Him, and He'll teach us the rest."

"Yes, darling," answered the mother, tenderly. "Show poor Charley how to come to Jesus with all his sins and troubles. When he brings these and lays them down at the dear Lord's feet, and asks to be forgiven, then Jesus Himself will do the rest, and lead His little lamb safe into the fold."

"He loves Charley, doesn't He?" asked Bessie, in a whisper.

"Indeed He does. He loves every one of His little ones, and I think the weak and suffering ones are always a little the dearest."

"And, mother, you are *sure* He is preparing a place for Charley in the beautiful home?"

"Oh yes, I am sure of that."

Jack looked again at his verse, and then shut up his Bible.

"I shan't forget that verse. I hope Charley will believe it. Mother, dear, may I run up to The Grange and talk to Charley whilst it is all fresh in my mind?"

Permission to do this was readily granted, and Jack ran off on his self-appointed errand, and Bessie was left with her mother.

Mrs. Howard sat very still and quiet, and Bessie looked into her face, and said to herself,—

Digitized by Google

"I think she is praying for Charley; I will pray for him, too. I'm sure mother's prayers will help him, and perhaps mine will, too, just a little. I do hope poor Charley will learn about the beautiful home in heaven."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

A DISCOVERY.

"SUCH a find, Jack! Such a glorious find!" shouted Harold, overtaking Jack on his homeward way one half-holiday, which the latter had been spending with Charley.

"What?" asked Jack, quickly.

"The jolliest place in the world; and, if you'll promise to keep the secret, we'll let you into it to-morrow."

"Of course I can keep a secret as well as any one," answered Jack. "Tell me what it is you've found."

"Oh, such a jolly place underground—a regular palace of our own!" cried Harold, who was in reality bursting with this new secret, which he was far less capable of concealing than was Jack. "Donald and I found it this afternoon, and we're going to fit it up and make a regular house of it."

"A place underground!" echoed Jack; "why, where did you find that?"

Harold calmed down to tell his story more rationally and clearly.

"Well, you know the old mine half way between here and the Ford?"

Digitized by Google

Jack nodded.

"You know we've often looked down the shaft, and half made up our minds to go down by one of the ropes lying about in the deserted sheds?"

Jack's eyes began to sparkle now.

"Yes, I know; and have you done it?"

"No, not exactly. One couldn't see how deep it went, and some people said the workings were full of water—but that's all bosh—and we never quite could make up our minds to try that way, any more than you or I could. But we've got in all the same, and a jollier place you never saw in your life!"

Harold rubbed his hands in delight, but Jack was eager for more news.

"How did you get in? Who found it out? Do make haste and tell me all about it! Is there another way beside the shaft?"

"Why, yes; that's just what there is. There's a hole almost covered by an old thorn-tree, just where the ground begins to fall away towards the Ford. We came upon it quite by chance, and when we looked in we saw that there was a rude sort of steps leading down somewhere. That was yesterday afternoon, and we couldn't do anything more then, because it was getting dark, and we hadn't a light; but we went again this afternoon with a bull's-eye lantern, and a ball of string, and some matches, and we explored the whole place."

"Did the steps lead down into the mine?" asked Jack, breathlessly.

"Yes; at least they led into a sort of cave and

Digitized by Google

the workings of the mine, and reached the cave in time. The entrance to the shaft is quite a long way off, but we found it and looked up. It didn't seem such a very long way up to get to the top. Some day, perhaps, we'll rig up a rope and a bucket to the beam that goes over it, as we sometimes talked of doing, and go up and down that way; but for the present the hole in the hill will do."

Jack rubbed his hands together excitedly. This was glorious news.

"And you found a place to camp in?" he asked, eagerly.

"Oh yes—a jolly place—a sort of square room which the miners must have used for some purpose or other, for it looks as if it had been cut out into its shape on purpose. You have to get to it from the cave and that part of the workings by going up steps, for the cave lies very low down and so do lots of the tunnels; but this little room is higher, and only a little lower runs a sort of passage leading to the shaft. We mean to make a regular house there. Donald says that if we go to work carefully he can get lots of things from the attics in The Grange to furnish the house; and he's going to buy an oil lamp to hang up to give a good light; and we shall have a place of our very own, where nobody can ever find us, and where we can do just what we like. Donald wanted us two to keep it all to ourselves; but I said you wouldn't peach, and we have lots to do, and I thought you'd like it and be useful."

Jack rubbed his hands together delightedly.

Digitized by Google

"Of course I should; and I'll do anything you like. I call it just glorious. Isn't Percy to know about it?"

"Well, not just yet, any way. One never knows how he'll take a thing; and if he were to go and let it out to Mr. Fontenore, there'd just be an end of everything."

"Why?"

"Oh, I don't know; but Donald says there would, and he knows. I think Mr. Fontenore once said something about the mine and keeping away from it. Any way Donald says he always does stop all their fun if he does find it out, so we're going to keep this a tremendous secret."

Jack looked grave for a minute, for his own instincts of obedience and truthfulness were very strong, but his intense wish to see and help to furnish this underground room prevailed over his scruples of reluctance.

"Well, mother would not mind our going, that is one comfort, and Mr. Fontenore is nothing to us. I suppose Donald must do as he chooses about his affairs."

"Yes," said Harold; "it's no good our meddling there. All we have to do is to hold our tongues, and get all the fun we can."

"Can't we get up early to-morrow morning and go there before breakfast?" questioned Jack. "I do so want to see it."

Harold agreed to this readily, as he was just as eager over the matter as any one, and by soon after six on the following morning the two boys were at the old thorn-tree that concealed the entrance to the mine.

Digitized by Google

As Harold had described it, there were a great many steps leading down into a natural cavern, which had been pierced in one or two directions by passages leading into the mine itself.

These workings lay very low, but at intervals rudely cut steps led upwards to similar passages above, and at last the boys reached the sort of room which had so greatly fired their fancy.

It was but a rude place, hollowed out of the solid rock; but it had capabilities, and might be made into a sort of apartment, and it seemed as if a fire had been lighted in past days in one deep recess, and a fissure leading upwards into black darkness might reasonably be supposed to have taken the place of a chimney, and carried off the smoke to the upper air.

"If we light a fire here," cried Harold, laughing, "and people see the smoke coming out of the ground, they will say that there are goblins down the old mine. What fun!"

Both boys laughed heartily at this idea, and Jack ran about examining everything. A few steps led down to a long gallery, which admitted at its farther end a faint ray of daylight. This was where the shaft ran up to the outer world, and Jack soon stood beneath, looking up the sixty feet of tunnel to the blue sky overhead.

"It would be rather nice to have a pulley arrangement and get up and down that way," he said to Harold, who only shook his head and answered,—

"So it would, but I don't think it would be very easy to manage; and if we did manage it, people would get to know, and then the secret would all

Digitized by Google

come out. The hole by the thorn-tree does very well, and it's much farther off."

Jack agreed to this, and abandoned the idea of using the shaft. Such a precious secret as this deserved jealous guarding. He went farther down the shaft gallery, and down a number more steps. Harold had not been this way before, and both were eagerly examining these old low-lying workings, when Jack became aware of a little trickling of water through what looked like solid wall. He called Harold's attention to the discovery.

"Oh, that's nothing. There's often a little water down underground in places like these."

"Where does it come from?" asked Jack.

"Oh, I don't know. One always sees it in caves and places. It's some spring, I suppose, dropping through. It does no harm."

"Of course not. I was wondering if it was good to drink. If it was, we could have a kettle and boil it on the fire, and make tea sometimes."

Harold was pleased with this idea, and they returned to their room more delighted with it and themselves than ever.

"It will be for all the world as good as Robinson Crusoe," cried Jack, enthusiastically. "We shall be just as much alone as he was, down here, and nobody can get at us, only we can come up when ever we choose, and lead two lives ourselves."

"Yes, it will be jolly," cried Harold; "but we must come along now, or we shall be late for breakfast, and we don't want questions asked."

Digitized by Google

"Aren't you going to tell mother?"

"No, I know she wouldn't mind a bit; and I've promised Donald not to tell anybody but you, and you've promised not to tell anybody, and so we can't; but I don't care, for of course mother would be pleased about it. She likes us to have good times."

"So she does; but I should have liked to tell her."

"Well, so should I; but it doesn't matter. It was Donald who found the hole, so that the cave seems really his, and we must do as he wants. He says things always do get round so quickly when a lot of people know, and so they do."

"All right, I won't tell," answered Jack. "If it's Donald's cave he must have his own way; though mother never lets out secrets."

And then they ran home to breakfast as fast as they could pelt.

During the course of the day, Jack, who had many friends amongst the village people, asked a few questions about the old mine.

It was the rector's gardener he fastened upon, an old man who had lived in the place for the fifty-five years of his life.

He remembered all about it—the new shaft being sunk and all. The old mine had paid well; but the new one did not do much. The ore seemed worked out, and it hardly repaid the cost of getting it up, though the company was very loth to admit that it was a failure.

Jack was surprised to hear of two mines, and by-and-by ascertained that their mine was the new one; but that the old one was very near.

Digitized by Google

"I only know of one shaft," said Jack.

"T'other is filled up—'twas too dangerous, they said, to leave it exposed, 'specially after the old mine filled with water. It hadn't got no protection round it, as this one has."

"The old mine filled with water, did it?" asked Jack, with interest.

"Ay, ay, that's what it did do. 'Twas one very wet spring as it happened—just such another as this. There was a reservoir in the hill-side then, and it burst and flooded the old mine. That's what made them leave working the new one. Folks declared it wasn't safe. The two workings went mighty close to one another in places, and they said as the water would burst through some day, and drown every mother's son amongst them. That just did the business. The mine wasn't paying as it was, and after that they just gave it up and went away."

"How long ago was that?"

"Nigh on fifteen years."

"And it's never flooded the new mine yet?"

"Not as I ever heerd tell. I suppose some folks would find out if it did."

Jack chuckled to himself, and his spirits rose again. They had been a little damped at first by the idea of danger.

"What's lasted fifteen years will last a few years more," he said to himself, gaily, as he bounded homewards over the fields. "When we're grown up it may burst if it likes!"

He communicated the discovery he had made to the others, but they only laughed at the idea of being afraid.

Digitized by Google

They said as Jack had said,—

"What has lasted fifteen years will last our time. When we've done with our room, we don't care how soon the flood comes."

They little knew how soon it would come.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNDERGROUND HOME.

A VERY delightful time ensued for the busy workers down in the mine.

Old odds and ends of furniture raked out from the garrets at The Grange were carefully and secretly transported thither. An old rug and a well-worn piece of matting supplied the place of a carpet. Jack, who was very handy with his fingers, contrived a sort of fireplace out of some iron and heavy stones; and he also made and put up a neat little cupboard, which held all their stores.

The stores largely consisted of things to eat, and were contributed for the most part by Donald.

Donald was a merry boy, very full of spirits, and fond of any kind of mischief. He would give ludicrous accounts of his raids into the butler's pantry or housekeeper's room after the pots of jam, the cakes, potted meats, jellies, and dried fruits with which he kept the cupboard supplied, and of the indignation and tumult caused thereby. Jack wondered sometimes why he did not ask for what he wanted, for surely in a great house like that

Digitized by Google

he would have been allowed all he required; but Donald laughed, and told him that the fun of the thing was the excitement of the chase, and if he began to ask for things they would think he was going to do something, and the secret would be in danger of getting out.

The Howards supposed he knew his own business best, and let him do things his own way. It was he who supplied nearly everything to make the "house" comfortable, and he was looked upon as the lord and master of it all.

The boys were much delighted by their new home, and often congratulated themselves on having such a capital place of concealment and amusement.

The season was one of those dreadfully wet ones not uncommon in this country. The rain poured down almost every day, and sometimes all day long.

Farmers looked serious, and talked of a failure of the crops. The autumn-sown corn was rotting in the ground, and the spring seed could not be sown in such weather. The floods were out in many places, and the country was everywhere quite sodden with the continuous rain.

The days were growing longer as the season advanced, and as it is hardly in a boy's nature to remain at home if he can find amusement out of doors, the owners of the cosy room in the mine congratulated themselves more and more on their subterranean abode. The galleries and passages were such capital places for hide and seek. They could play such glorious games of surprise and attack, and defence in the dark chambers and rude

Digitized by Google

stairways; and when any one had a few pence to spare for squibs, crackers, or coloured lights, then they could have the most splendid illuminations down in their deep retreat.

Jack would have given much to let Bessie share this secret, but girls were not held of much reputation by the Fontenores, and his request had been sternly negatived. His twin sister knew that he had a secret, and that was all.

Percy, however, had been taken into the plot, as it had been found dangerous after a time to exclude him from their confidence. He knew by his brother's mysterious absences that something was going on, and he threatened so many times to put a stop to it if he were not told, that Donald thought it better to make him free of the cave.

Percy was much taken with the cheerful little underground house, with its lamp, its furniture, and bright little fire. At first he made himself very pleasant, and it was plain that four boys could play more games than three; but Percy had not got a very pleasant temper or an agreeable nature, and he was often very overbearing and irritating towards his companions.

Donald was used to his brother's ways, and did not bother himself much about what he said or did, and Harold was too easy-going to care very much; but Jack, who had a much more fiery temper, found it very hard to submit tamely to Percy's insolence; and it seemed as if the big boy made himself particularly disagreeable to the youngest member of the party.

Percy had always appeared from the first to take

Digitized by Google

a great dislike to Jack. Jack had ridden without any trouble a pony that Percy had been afraid even to mount, and had jumped him over a fence, moreover, so cleverly that the coachman and grooms had applauded the feat warmly.

Mr. Fontenore had once taken Jack and Harold for a ride (because, as he said, his own sons were such lubbers on horseback he was ashamed to be seen with them), and Jack had kept up well the whole way, and by his skill and courage as a horseman had won Mr. Fontenore's respect.

Percy was by nature something of a coward, and knew it, though he would have been furious had anybody told him so. His father sometimes spoke sneeringly to him and of him, and had once or twice been heard to say that "Jack Howard was twice the man he would ever be;" and these remarks had been like gall and wormwood to Percy, and had not tended to allay the resentment which Jack's freedom of speech and independence of manner had aroused from the first.

Jack had always declined to pay any particular homage to Percy, just because he was the eldest son of the man who now began to be called the "Squire," and might some day be squire himself. Percy considered himself a very great man indeed, and thought that everybody ought to treat him with deference and respect; but Jack was a sturdy, independent Briton, who understood some things much better than Percy did, and was not in the least inclined to pay respect to mere wealth that had nothing else to recommend it. He had from the first shown this very plainly, and it had been deeply resented.

Digitized by Google

Accordingly, when the eldest of the Fontenores was admitted to the underground room, in which so many happy hours had been passed, poor little Jack found a considerable diminution of the pleasure he had before experienced.

Percy was determined to find fault with all he did and with his way of doing it, and he made Jack's life a burden to him in every way in his power, until the little boy began to go less and less to the mine as every week passed away.

He had another reason for this, and that was Charley's increasing weakness and desire for his company; but he would not have spent so many hours at The Grange if it had not been for Percy's unkindness and contempt.

But there was worse still to come for poor Jack, for one unlucky day it befel him to mortally offend all three of his companions.

Now a secret such as these four boys had kept for so long is not altogether an easy matter to guard altogether and entirely. Rumours have an odd way of getting afloat, nobody knows how, and so it was in this case. Perhaps the boys themselves grew a little careless of guarding their secret. Success may have given them over-confidence, and they may have unconsciously betrayed themselves from time to time.

However that may have been, it is certain that vague rumours did get about that the boys had found some way of getting into the old mine, and in some way or another this report reached Mr. Fontenore's ears.

Now Mr. Fontenore was a stern and rather a harsh man, though neither so stern nor so harsh in

Digitized by Google

reality as his sons believed. His ideas of education and the bringing up of boys were severe, and he had not managed to temper his severity with the amount of gentleness and justice that might have won his sons' hearts. He did not think it of any consequence what his children thought of him, or of his method of ruling them; and in that he made a mistake, for he could easily have led his boys where he never could drive them, and have spared much pain both to himself and to them. But when people do not recognise the Fatherhood of God, they seldom are able to be kind or wise and loving fathers to their own children.

When this report, then, reached Mr. Fontenore's ears it disturbed him a good deal, for he was told at the same time that the mine must be in a very unsafe condition after this wet season, owing to the increased pressure of water now filling the old workings. The wonder was that the walls had not given way before, and there could be no doubt that they must be in a very insecure state, owing to the ceaseless action of the water all these years.

After hearing all this, Mr. Fontenore determined to find out if his sons were in the habit of frequenting the deserted mine, and if so, to put a stop once and for all to their visits.

Just about the time he had arrived at this conclusion, he chanced to meet the four boys on their homeward way one evening, after a long visit to their underground home. They were planning some improvements to add to their comfort, and as Jack was the handiest of the four with his fingers, Percy had been unusually pleasant to him in order

Digitized by Google

to secure his services, and Jack was beginning to hope that the ill-feeling had blown over, and that he should be able to take his old place in the house they had made.

"Cavey!" cried Percy, quickly, effectually stopping the merry voices of his companions. "Here's the governor; let's hide!"

But it was too late to hide, for Mr. Fontenore had seen them, and was evidently waiting for them to approach.

"Where have you been, boys?" he asked, as they reluctantly advanced.

He looked at Percy, who answered boldly,—

"In the copse over there."

This was not exactly untrue, as the entrance to their cave involved a walk through the copse, but of course such a statement was not a right answer to the question.

"What have you been doing ever since you left Dr. Arden's?"

"Playing out there," answered Percy, pointing vaguely behind him.

"What! In all this downpour of rain?"

Now the boys, safely housed underground, had known nothing about the rain, and Percy looked visibly disconcerted and confused.

"In point of fact," continued Mr. Fontenore, with increased sternness, "you have been in the old mine all this time."

A start of dismay passed through the group, and Percy, feeling that desperate circumstances called for desperate remedies, looked up boldly, and said,—

"No, we haven't. We went to see old Jack, the

Digitized by Google

woodman. We've never been in the mine at all. There's no way of getting in except down the shaft, and of course that's no go."

Jack felt his face flush hotly. He was not by any means a model boy. He had plenty of faults and failings of his own; but he had always been honest and truthful, and would no more have framed a deliberate lie like that than he would have tried to fly down the disused shaft. It did not tend to reassure him to see Mr. Fontenore's keen eyes fixed first on his flushed face and then on Percy's sullen one.

"Percy," he said, sternly, "tell me the truth. Do you ever go into the old mine?"

A second lie is always easier than the first, and the boy answered readily,—

"No, never, sir."

A sharp frown contracted Mr. Fontenore's face. He turned suddenly upon Jack, and said,—

"Now you answer me, boy; I think you've too much pluck to be a coward, and you haven't the face of a liar. Tell me, do you ever go into the mine under the hill?"

Jack cast one appealing glance at his companions. Percy's eyes were fixed threateningly upon him, but Harold and Donald did not even look up.

He could not help himself, and he answered,—

"Yes, sir."

"Do you often go?"

"Yes, sir."

"In point of fact, you have some hiding-place of your own down there, that you patronise pretty freely? Is that so?"

Digitized by Google

And again came the reluctant answer,—

"Yes."

"And what about these boys of mine? Do they share this den of yours?"

But Jack looked up bravely, and said,—

"I don't think it's fair, sir, to ask me questions about them; and I'd rather not answer."

Mr. Fontenore's face was not easy to read; but it did not alarm Jack.

"You'd rather not answer, eh? But suppose I'd rather you did?"

"I don't think you will make me do that, sir; I don't suppose you like tale-telling any better than I do. I don't mind telling you what I do; but when it comes to other people, I'd rather you asked them themselves."

"Yes, and get answers such as you heard just now," said Mr. Fontenore, looking at Jack with something of a smile, but very sternly at his own sons.

Jack said nothing, but he felt that he should have to answer for this to his companions later on; but he could not have told a lie, whatever they said or did, and he knew that Harold would stand by him, although not a boy of much character or strength of purpose.

"Now listen, boys," said Mr. Fontenore, slowly and sternly. "Once and for all, I forbid you ever entering that old mine again. You might have spared yourself the trouble of lying—Percy and I will settle that affair later on—but understand that you are absolutely forbidden to go to that place any more, and that if you disobey me you do it at your peril."

Digitized by Google

And with that Mr. Fontenore turned on his heel and walked away, leaving his sons and their friends in total ignorance as to the cause of this prohibition, which certainly sounded both severe and needlessly stringent.

It would have been both wiser and kinder if Mr. Fontenore had explained to them the existence of the real danger that threatened the mine; but he was a man who never chose to give a reason for any order he gave, and his children certainly ought to have obeyed without one; but boys growing up to manhood have a certain claim to be treated with a little more confidence, and this peremptory order roused great indignation.

A storm of rage burst the moment that Mr. Fontenore had disappeared, and volleys of abuse were levelled at poor Jack. He was called "sneak," "tell-tale," "cad," and every name most insulting to a boy's nature, and was plainly told that he would be sent to Coventry for the rest of his natural life. Harold and Donald left the talking to Percy, but they were sufficiently angry at what had happened to allow Jack to be roundly abused without in any way trying to take his part; and at last Jack burst away, unable to stand it any longer, crying out as he went that he hated them all, and never would do anything for any of them again as long as he lived.

After that he shunned his companions as much as he possibly could; and though he learnt from Harold that the visits to the mine continued almost as frequent as ever, in spite of the prohibition, he never once attempted to go near the place again. He once suggested that his brother had better

Digitized by Google

keep away too; but Harold did not see that Mr. Fontenore's command concerned him in any way, and went on as before.

Jack was left entirely to his own resources, and to the companionship of the little girls and of Charley.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

CHARLEY.

AND what was going on all this time in the mind of the little sick boy at the great house, who had nothing to do for so many long hours but lie upon his couch with his books or his thoughts for his companions?

As the days lengthened out, and winter slowly merged itself in spring, it seemed as if some sort of a change passed over little Charley.

He was conscious of it himself before anybody else awoke to it—conscious that he was growing very slowly, yet very steadily, more weak, more thin, more helpless. He knew that many little things that he could once do quite easily were now a labour and a trouble, that Veronica's merry chatter often tired his head, and that going out had become a penance instead of a pleasure.

His nurse, who was a kind and capable woman though not a tender one, told him when she observed his languor and disinclination to move, that he must rouse himself and do all he could to get strong; that spring was always a trying time, especially such a wet season as this, and that he would pick up again very fast when the warm

Digitized by Google

weather came; but Charley had never felt like this in other springs, and he did not altogether believe what the nurse told him.

He used to lie for many long hours every day looking out of the schoolroom window, and doing nothing, whilst strange thoughts and fancies floated through his head, thoughts which he could not have put into words, but which, nevertheless, haunted him with strange persistence.

In London he had never felt like this. There he had always found plenty of distraction to keep his mind from dwelling long on any one idea. The crowded street, with its rolling carriages and hurrying foot-passengers, stirred no strange thoughts within him, and the bustle and stir that always goes on in a London house had given plenty of occupation to his busy mind.

But here all was different. Here the stillness was often unbroken for many long hours. A sort of strange hush seemed to him to lie upon the sleeping land. The great trees stood up bare and leafless against the pale sky. The hedges were dark and lifeless, the meadows green and dank, flooded in places by the overflowing brooks. All seemed to him strangely silent and dead, like the crippled life, as he sometimes said to himself, that lay spread out before him.

Children cannot give expression to their thoughts, and it is often said that they are occupied in reality only by the trivial details of their lives, and that they do not trouble their heads over the deep mysteries of life and death, and things unseen and eternal. But this is a very great mistake, at any rate in a great majority of cases of children brought

Digitized by Google

up and educated as Charley had been, with a view to expanding the intellect and strengthening the powers of thought.

Charley's mind had developed rapidly, and the state of his health had seemed rather a help than a hindrance to the growth of his mental powers; like many other children, he had a strong instinct for metaphor. He was always tracing parallels between outward and inward life, making hidden meanings for himself in the sudden alternations of sunshine and rain, storm and calm, and the many varying aspects of nature.

And so, as he looked out of his window day after day upon this dead, bare world around him, he told himself that his life would be just like that—cold, and barren, and lifeless—and he felt a sort of sad sympathy with the cheerless world without.

But gradually, as the days became weeks, his eyes began to detect changes in all the bare, dead things around. The hedgerows began to look green with the soft green of the honeysuckle. Primroses began to gleam in sheltered corners. The buds upon the bare trees swelled visibly, and one by one the tender green shoots would burst from out the brown sheaths that had so long concealed them, and the tree would become almost like a fairy thing, with its countless tassels of sprouting leaves. Then the cherry trees in the garden began to look like masses of snow with their pure frail blossoms; and as for the rooks in the still bare elms, they could not be busy enough over their nests and their affairs generally, but were cawing, and flapping, and working, and gossiping from morning till night.

Digitized by Google

Charley watched all these changes with an absorbing interest. He never grew tired of seeing how the beautiful world woke slowly up from its long winter's sleep; and very much did he wonder how it was that everything in nature—birds, flowers, trees, all alike—knew the right time for waking, knew that the winter was over and gone, and the beautiful spring-time drawing on.

Who told the rooks to build their nests? Who told the birds to sing as they only sing in the glad spring-time? Who whispered to the trees and flowers that their time had come to awake and grow? It was no warmer than it had been all the winter, indeed, it seemed more cold and dank, Charley thought, with each succeeding week. How then did everything know that the time of awakening had come?

Charley puzzled his head over this point a great deal, but he had not yet arrived at a conclusion that satisfied himself.

Spring is generally a season of great gladness; but to Charley there was something unutterably sad in the new, beautiful life he saw everywhere around him. What did it all mean? There must be some hidden meaning, he thought, under that mysterious awakening of sleeping nature? Why had he no part in it? Why did no corresponding brightness shine into his life? Was everything to be glad, and beautiful, and strong, and he only excluded from it all?

Why did he feel weaker and weaker, and more and more ill, just when everything else was growing into a new and lovelier life?

Gradually, he knew not how, the consciousness

Digitized by Google

came over him that he should never grow any stronger, that the frail life within him was ebbing away, and that he would soon be called upon to leave all that he had known—his home, his playfellows, and friends—and go out into the dark mysterious spirit world of which he knew nothing, and which seemed to him full of dread, and darkness, and horror.

Think what it is, fathers and mothers, who neglect to teach young children the deep lessons of God because they are too young or too careless; think what it is to them to look, as children will always look at times, into the inevitable future that lies before them—the future that lies beyond the grave—and see there nothing but black darkness, which no ray of Divine light can penetrate to tell them of the life beyond. Think of this, and then go and tell your little ones of that tender Shepherd who gathers the lambs in His arms, and carries them safely over the dark river till He can place them in the everlasting home that He has prepared for those that love Him. Tell them that even the tiniest infant among them may learn to love that Good Shepherd, and learn that nothing either in life or death can separate them from His love and care.

But Charley did not know this. All he knew of the Bible was the historical portions, which interested him but little, and brought no sense of comfort to his soul. He had no one to teach him what he so sorely needed; and it seemed to him that he had to face the dim, mysterious future quite alone, and that he did not know how to do it.

Digitized by Google

All seemed very sad and strange to the little sick boy, as he lay on his couch looking out into the bright world around him; and it was Mrs. Howard's sweet face and whispered words, and a few sentences that fell from Jack, that first roused him to a sense that, perhaps, after all some comfort might be found even for him amid all this desolation.

And then began Jack's visits and his simple words of straightforward conviction. Jack was not troubled by any morbid doubts or fears. What his mother told him and what the Bible said must, of course, be true without a possibility of error; and as he talked on to Charley about the home that Christ had prepared in His Father's house for every one who would believe in Him and trust Him, it seemed to the little sick boy as if *there* he should find the meaning of all that troubled him, if only he could be certain of finding his way to that beautiful home above.

Jack could not see the difficulty.

"Why, of course, Jesus will take you there when you die—He will take us all there. You know He said He had gone to prepare a place where He would receive us to Himself. What more do you want than that?"

"He said that to the apostles, not to us."

"I know; but it means us all the same. Mother says so. You know what Jesus says, He always said to us all. He never changes; besides, there are lots of other places where it says that we shall go to be with Him when we die."

"If we are good," suggested Charley.

"No, no!" returned Jack; "we never are good.

Digitized by Google

Even mother says she is not good, though I can't understand what she means. Any way, it doesn't depend upon being good, or else I'd never get there."

"But don't we have to *try* to be good?" asked Charley.

"Of course. What we have to do, mother says, is to love God with all our might, and ask Him to forgive our sins because Jesus died to take them away, and to give us His Holy Spirit to teach us and help us all our lives long. If we do that, and really mean it, of course we shall try as hard as ever we can to be good and not grieve the Holy Spirit; and then when we die Jesus will let us in to His beautiful home, because He wants us all to come, and died to take away the sins that would have kept us out."

This conversation took place many weeks after Jack's first attempt to make Charley understand that there was a real home waiting for him in heaven. Charley's comments and questions had puzzled Jack a good deal at first, and he had had to bring many difficulties to his mother for solution before he could really convince and comfort his little friend and companion. But these difficulties, and the thoughts they had raised, and the study they had entailed, had been very good for Jack. They had taught him to think and reason much more closely than he had ever done before, when he had believed as a matter of course everything that was taught him, and had not seen any need to grapple with difficulties and take sure hold on facts, and such hold that he could convince others of what he firmly believed himself.

Digitized by Google

Now, however, he had been obliged to do this, or else Charley's arguments and questions would have been too much for him, and would have forced him to appear as if he had had the worst of it; and of very great use had this training been, and it had taught Jack that there is nothing so good for learning as having another to teach.

So Jack had struggled manfully, and was nearly always ready now with a clear answer to a question and a way out of every difficulty, and sometimes he felt amply rewarded for his pains.

"Jack," said Charley, after a long pause, "if all that's true, there's a chance for me."

"Of course there is. Did you think there wasn't?"

"Sometimes I do. I feel so wicked."

"Well, I'm glad you do feel that," was Jack's unexpected answer, "because, you see, I don't think it can be right not to feel our sins. You remember about the Pharisee and the Publican? Well, if we just want to take everything God will give us, without caring about how bad we've been, I don't think He would think we were quite sincere. It's when we know we've been bad, and come to Jesus to get forgiven, that He is so glad to wash away our sins and make us clean and white. I don't think we ever feel so bad as when we're trying to be good. I suppose directly God's Spirit begins to get into our hearts, He shows us how awfully black and bad they were before; and then we can't be happy till we've got them clean again."

Charley looked long and earnestly out of the window, but the intense mournful sadness had left his eyes of late.

Digitized by Google

"Jack," he said, slowly and thoughtfully, "I think I begin to see the meaning of it all now. It used to be one great puzzle."

Jack did not quite understand what he meant, but as he fancied Charley looked tired, he said good-bye, and ran home.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

A BIRTHDAY.

THE first day of May was Charley's birthday, and he was allowed to choose for himself how it should be celebrated.

A month or two ago he and Veronica had decided that they would have a picnic in a wood when that day came round, and play at being gipsies, and make a sort of camp, and boil their kettle over a fire of dried sticks; but now that the day approached there was no such talk as this, for Charley had ceased to go out in his wheeled couch, and he sometimes said to himself that he should never go out any more until he was carried in his little coffin to the quiet churchyard, to sleep there until the great day of awakening should come.

But he did not speak of these thoughts, and the idea of the picnic was nominally given up because the ground was in so wet a state from the heavy rainfall. Still, Charley was to choose what he would like to do to celebrate the day, and he chose to have Jack and Bessie to spend the afternoon with him and Veronica, and added that he should

Digitized by Google

like it very much if Mrs. Howard would come too, by-and-by, and have some tea with them upstairs.

"I will ask her, Charley," Mrs. Fontenore said, when the request was made known to her. "But I don't think you ever asked *me* to tea with you yet!"

Mrs. Fontenore had come oftener of late to see her little boy, and her manner towards him had changed somewhat; it was more mother-like and less languidly indifferent than it had been before, and he was quite alive to the change, and quite aware of the cause.

"I did not think you would care to come," answered Charley, fixing his hollow eyes upon her face. "Mrs. Howard always has tea with Jack and Bessie, and they all like it; but you never have tea with us."

"Well, if Mrs. Howard comes on your birthday, as I think she will do, Charley, we will both come up and take tea with you."

"Very well," answered Charley, who would have preferred Mrs. Howard alone, but refrained from saying so; and Mrs. Fontenore went away.

"Oh, Charley!" cried Veronica, dismally, "why didn't you ask mamma to come another day? It will spoil it all now—it's almost as bad as having Miss Ansty to say 'Sh-sh-' to everything."

"I couldn't say so," answered Charley, gravely; "it would have been unkind."

"No, it wouldn't. She would not have cared."

"I think she would—now."

Digitized by Google

"Why now?"

Charley looked out of the window and said nothing.

"Why *now?*" repeated Veronica.

"I'll tell you some time, perhaps," answered Charley, "but not just now."

Veronica's eyes opened wide.

"Have you got a secret, Charley?"

"Yes, I think so."

"A nice one?"

The little girl was puzzled by the expression of his face as he answered,—

"I don't think you would think so, but I do."

Veronica felt vaguely uneasy, and said no more.

Charley's invitations were readily and eagerly accepted. Bessie and Veronica were as friendly as the two brothers, and their happiest hours were spent in company. Children learn a great deal from each other without knowing it. Bessie and Jack were far more contented with their own little home, after learning in so practical a way that it is not the size of the house, nor the luxury of its fittings, that makes the happiness of the lives of its inmates; and Veronica began to grumble less and less over the primness and strictness of Miss Ansty, when she saw that Mrs. Howard expected equal attention to good manners from her little daughter, and observed that Bessie was not permitted to talk slang nor to slur over her lessons, nor to do many of the things which Veronica had fancied quite innocent, and had resented being debarred from by Miss Ansty's rules.

Digitized by Google

And, in addition to this, all four children were learning to think, as they had never done before, of that happy home above, where all that seemed wanting in their lives below would so surely be made up to them, where the light of the Eternal Love would shine for ever upon them.

Bessie and Jack came early on the birthday afternoon. They had each brought a book for Charley, as books were the presents most appreciated by the little invalid; but that was not all either, for the twins had been up and out betimes that day, and had found a wealth of spring flowers and natural treasures, and had made up a lovely basket of moss and primroses, anemones, bluebells, and all sorts of lovely things, and in the midst a sweet little nest with four tiny spotted eggs inside. The whole made a charming picture, and Charley's face glowed as he held out his hands for it.

"Oh, how lovely! how lovely! I never saw anything so beautiful in all my life. How I wish flowers didn't die, but stayed fresh and beautiful like that always!"

"What a sweet little nest!" cried Veronica; "did birds really make it?"

"Yes, it's a little bullfinch's nest; but the birds got frightened and deserted it, or we wouldn't have taken it, for I think that's being cruel. Mamma said it would make a very pretty centre for our basket, and I think it does, don't you?"

"Lovely!" answered both children, with enthusiasm. Veronica added,—

Digitized by Google

"I do believe, Charley, that you like that the best of all your presents."

"I think I do," he answered. "The other things all came out of shops, but these grow in the woods and the fields."

"Only the other things will last years and years," said the practical Veronica, "and the flowers will all be dead in a little while."

Charley made no answer. He was still looking lovingly at his beautiful basket. Veronica began to show the presents, which were piled upon a little table beside the couch. Most of these were books, very handsome, and full of pictures; but some costly articles were there besides.

"I think he has had nicer presents than he ever did before," concluded Veronica, at the close of the display; "but I don't think he ever seemed to care so little about them."

"I do care about them," answered Charley, quickly. "I like them very much. I like to think that the people thought about me and wondered what I should like, and then chose the things, and packed them up and sent them. I think it is all very nice, and I like to see them all lie there, and fancy just how they were thought of and chosen."

"Oh yes, I know that," answered Veronica, quickly; "but I don't believe you care much about the *things*."

Charley made no direct response, but only said,—

"Now, don't you want to play at gipsies?"

Playing at gipsies was a very favourite game at

Digitized by Google

The Grange. The window curtains, by a little adjustment and the addition of a few shawls, were made into a sort of tent, and Veronica could always get supplies of eatables from the kitchen to make those feasts and messes so peculiarly attractive to children, and Charley could take a passive share in the game by being a disabled gipsy, a wounded traveller, or a lazy good-for-nought, according to the exigencies of circumstances.

To-day, however, he did not take any active share in the game, but lay watching his merry companions with great attention and some pleasure, but with a certain wistful gravity not easy to fathom. Jack was the first to notice this, and, leaving the two "old crones," as the girls had named themselves, to crouch over the fire and watch the contents of their pot, he crossed over and sat down by Charley.

"Your mother is coming by-and-by, isn't she?"

"Yes, I think she is downstairs now with your mother. She will come up and see you presently."

"I sometimes think," said Charley, slowly, almost as if he were speaking to himself, "that if I were dying I should like to hold your mother's hand, and look at her, and listen to her voice, until God's angel came for me and took me away. It would not seem like dying then, I think."

Jack looked at him without any surprise. He thought Charley was quite right. He could wish for nothing better for himself than that, and these two often talked together of death.

Digitized by Google

"How grave you two look!" cried Veronica, running up. "We've spoilt our stew. It tastes of smoke; and besides it's nearly tea-time now, so we don't want anything to eat. I hope on your next birthday, Charley, we shall be able to have a real picnic. My birthday is in January, so I never can have anything nice, and the boys don't care about our sort of games. It isn't always wet and cold like this in spring, is it? I hope next year we shall be able to go. You'd like it, wouldn't you, Charley?"

Jack looked away out of the window, and Bessie's eyes were lowered. Both these children knew pretty well that before another year had passed little Charley would be far away, in more beautiful scenes than anything that they could realize; but Veronica did not know, she had no idea of such a thing, and the silence of her companions surprised and disconcerted her.

"Why don't you answer?" she asked, vaguely uneasy. "Why shouldn't we go a picnic on Charley's next birthday?"

The door had opened so gently that the children had not even heard it; but now she saw that both Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Fontenore had entered and had heard Veronica's question.

Charley looked into Mrs. Howard's face with one of the sudden radiant smiles that one seldom sees on faces except of those who stand very near to the Golden Gates.

"You tell her," he said.

Mrs. Fontenore had sunk down in a chair with

Digitized by Google

her handkerchief to her eyes. Downstairs she had been telling Mrs. Howard of the doctor's last decree respecting the speedy termination of Charley's illness, and she had been much overcome whilst doing so; but she did not expect a repetition of the scene upstairs.

Veronica was not slow of comprehension. The reason she had never before guessed the meaning of many things passing around her was due to her very familiarity with Charley's state, and the gradual decay of the boy's strength—so gradual as almost to elude observation. Nobody had ever breathed a hint in her presence that her brother was more ill than was natural under the circumstances; and, now that the sudden meaning of things flashed upon her, she turned very pale and began to tremble.

But Mrs. Howard, fortunately, was there, and from her own experience she knew just how to deal with children in their deep as well as in their little troubles.

She took the trembling child in her arms and held her very closely.

"My darling," she said, softly, "we must try not to be selfish. If dear Charley is going away to the beautiful home above, we must try to thank our tender Father, who has taken him away out of all the pain and sorrow and trouble that we all of us have to suffer here. Charley is glad to go when he is called, and we must be glad for his sake, and not cry because we shall not see him any more. We must try to think more and more of the home that is waiting for us too, that when our time comes we may join

Digitized by Google

him there, and never have to say good-bye any more."

Every one in the quiet room heard the softly spoken words. Charley smiled peacefully, and Bessie and Jack furtively wiped their eyes. Mrs. Fontenore sobbed from time to time; but Veronica lay very still in Mrs. Howard's arms, thinking about it all, and trying to understand.

At this moment the door was opened by the maid, who carried in the tea; and the time for serious talk was over. Charley looked at Mrs. Howard, and when she came and bent over him he whispered,—

"I want them to be happy, please."

So after that Mrs. Howard took care that there should be no more said that would be likely to bring back tears and sad faces. She talked in her own bright, sweet way, and Bessie and Jack imitated her, and even Mrs. Fontenore and Veronica began at last to smile, and Charley looked on contentedly, and felt a restful happiness steal over him.

It was his mother to-day who waited on him and attended to all his requirements. Charley felt half confused at first to find who was buttering his toast and handing his tea; but he looked up gratefully and gladly, and Mrs. Fontenore tried to smile back, and in spite of the great tear that came splashing down on a piece of bread and butter, the little boy felt as if he had never tasted anything so good before. A sudden warm glow seemed to penetrate his heart, and by-and-by he got possession of his mother's hand and held it fast.

Digitized by Google

When Mrs. Howard came for a last kiss before her departure, he held her very fast round the neck, and whispered,—

"Thank you so much for coming. I have had *such* a happy birthday!"

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER X.

THE FLOODED MINE.

So far as Jack's relations with Charley went, nothing could be better, nor could any two boys be more warmly attached to one another. But with the other two boys from The Grange, and even with his own brother, matters were very different, and Jack was made to feel very unpleasantly that he was looked upon as a traitor and a sneak.

He was never permitted to enter the underground house, although he heard with longing ears the stories of the improvements and additions that had been made there; and the emnity he had aroused did not stop there, for he was now shunted away out of every plan of enjoyment made by the others, and was not allowed to take a share in any single thing they did.

As Percy had said, he was completely "sent to Coventry," and a very unpleasant place he found it.

Unkindness, too, did not stop there. It was bad enough to be debarred from the pleasures of the other boys, but Jack had more to bear than this. Percy set himself to spread unjust and untrue re-

Digitized by Google

ports about Jack's meanness of spirit and sneaking ways; and as he was a boy who carried a good deal of weight, owing to his position as Mr. Fontenore's eldest son, he was able to make Jack unpopular with other people as well as with himself.

He played him many ill-natured tricks, too, and bullied him as only a coward will bully a boy younger and weaker than himself. Altogether, poor Jack had a very bad time of it, and but for the lessons of patience and gentleness learned at Charley's side, and in connection with him, the lad's endurance might have given way altogether, and he might have been tempted to try and retaliate in kind.

He felt it very hard that his brother made no stand in his favour. He believed that, had Harold been in his place on the day they met Mr. Fontenore, he too would have spoken the truth, and he was hurt and aggrieved that his brother did not try to take his side sometimes. But both Harold and Donald were of that easy-going, pleasure-living temperament that always tries to swim with the stream and avoid the disagreeables of life. They were good-natured boys in the main, and would never have begun the persecution to which Jack was subjected, but they found it much pleasanter to aid and abet Percy than to thwart him, and so they ranged themselves on his side, and left Jack to shift for himself as best he might.

Matters were on this footing, and Jack was feeling very dull and dismal, and was wandering gloomily about by himself one Saturday afternoon.

Charley was so ill that day that he had only

Digitized by Google

been allowed to stay a few minutes in his room, and Bessie was trying to comfort Veronica, and Jack felt that he was of no use to anybody, and not wanted anywhere, and was wandering about by himself in a very despondent state of mind.

Hardly knowing what he did, he turned his steps in the familiar direction of the old mine. He was pretty certain that his companions were there, for the rain had fallen more heavily than ever during the past days and nights, and although the sun was shining to-day, the country was more like a great bog than anything else.

Jack was wandering along, not heeding much where he went nor what he was doing, when he suddenly became aware of an extraordinary sound beneath his feet. He could not make out what it was; but it sounded almost like the shock of an earthquake, and was accompanied by a rushing, and a quivering, and an upheaval, as it seemed, that scared Jack terribly for the few seconds that it lasted, and left him breathless and bewildered.

Then in a moment the truth flashed across him. The catastrophe so long foretold had happened at last. The wall of partition that divided the old workings from the new had given way at last, owing to the pressure of the water, and now the whole mine was flooded.

As this conviction forced itself upon Jack, his heart seemed to stand still.

The mine was flooded—and his brother and two companions were down in its depth!

Hardly knowing what he was doing, Jack made a rush for the opening to the cave; but he had only descended a dozen steps when he found himself

Digitized by Google

in the water, which was still rising. He knew by his acquaintance with the different levels that his companions were yet safe; but how long would they remain so? How long would the water be in rising to their room? Not long, he felt certain, by the pace at which the steps were being covered. There was no way of reaching them but by the shaft, no time to summon help, for the nearest cottage was more than a mile away. If anything was to be done to save them, it must be done at once, and Jack was the only one who could by any chance do it.

Without wasting a second, he tore to the mouth of the shaft. As has been said before, the crank by which the miners used to get up and down still crossed the mouth of the shaft, and seemed strong, although the handle had been long since removed. In one of the disused sheds lay some coils of rope, and upon the strongest of these Jack seized.

Fortunately it had a noose at one end, and Jack was able at length, though with much difficulty and no little danger to himself, owing to the weight of the rope, to put the end through the noose after he had passed it first across the crank, and then by lowering the rope down the shaft he pulled the noose tight, and it hung firmly fastened—a connecting link between the unhappy boys below and the light and beauty of the world above.

But what next?

Shout as he would, Jack failed to make the prisoners hear that rescue was possible, and the only thing to do now was to descend himself into

Digitized by Google

the flooded mine and tell them that they might still be saved.

Jack was a brave lad; but he did shrink greatly from a task like this. He could see that the gallery beneath the shaft, which had been dry when first he began his labours, was now covered with water, by the reflection of his own form therein as he made fast the rope to the crank. Of the depth of the water he could form no idea—probably as yet it was not great; but who could say what might not happen by the time he had reached the distant room and urged his companions to escape? And, again, if he were to descend that rope, could he, tired as he already was, climb it again to get out? Jack was a strong and agile boy, and under ordinary circumstances could swarm up a rope like a sailor; but could he do so after such exertions as he had just made?

Death down in that dark dreadful mine was very awful to contemplate, and there was quite a chance that the boys might not be there at all, or that they might already have been caught by the flood and be past human help even now. And then how cruel and unjust they had been to him for many long weeks! Could it be his duty to risk his life for them?

These thoughts take long to write and read, but they flashed through Jack's head in a moment of time, and he did not hesitate many seconds.

He knelt suddenly down on the damp grass and clasped his hands tight together. He spoke out loud in his earnestness,—

"O God, please take care of me, and help me to do what I am going to try. Please take care of

Digitized by Google

the others down there, and let us all be saved. If I die, please take me to the beautiful home where Charley is going, and comfort dear mother, and let her know that I tried to do what I ought; but please, please let me come back safe, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

The thought that his mother might lose two sons, and never know how they had died, or even that they had died at all, almost unnerved Jack; but he put the thought resolutely away, and seizing the rope in both hands, boldly swung himself down the yawning shaft.

Percy and Donald and Harold had gone early to their underground retreat that day. They had been told not to come back at mid-day, because Charley was very ill, and the less noise there was in the house the better it would be for him; so the three boys had dined in their subterranean home, and had made merry there after their usual manner round the little fire they had lighted.

No presentiment of danger troubled them as to their own safety, and they were too much used to the fact of Charley's serious illness to think overmuch about him. They had never been told that their little brother could not get better, and took this sudden failure for a mere trifling relapse.

So they chatted and laughed and made themselves very merry, and thought of nothing but their own pleasure, until the awful sounds which Jack had heard outside made themselves heard throughout the length and breadth of that dismal place.

To their lives' end those boys will never forget the terror of that moment, when, with a resounding

Digitized by Google

crash and a frightful rush, the water began swirling along the dark galleries and flooding the newer workings of the mine.

Terror-stricken, the boys clung together and listened to the awful sounds, too much terrified to move. Every moment they expected to be swept away by the flood they heard surging round them; and they were perfectly paralysed with fear, and gave themselves up for lost. The crash of falling water as it leaped from one level to another was inexpressibly awful, and the boys hardly dared to breathe as they stood waiting and listening.

At last the first terrible rush subsided. For a moment they thought the present danger was past. They ventured timidly to descend the few steps that led to the main gallery, which they found dry; but when they attempted to descend into the lower workings, through which led their only way to safety, they found to their horror that they lay fathoms deep in water, and that their exit was hopelessly cut off.

Terror-stricken, they gazed into each other's white faces. Would they have to die down there in the darkness of this awful prison? Nobody knew where they were, nobody would ever know where to look for them, and as for the shaft—the only means of exit now—nothing without wings could attempt to reach the outer world by that way. It was an awful thought—that they might be left to perish here of hunger and cold—so awful that they durst not face such a future, and tried to read encouragement and reassurance each in the face of the other.

"Jack knows," cried Harold, suddenly. "Jack

Digitized by Google

will know where we are likely to be when we are missed. He will come to find us, and then they will find out what has happened, and they will let a bucket or something down the shaft and pull us up that way."

For a moment a breath of life and courage seemed to breathe over the boys; death, then, was not an awful certainty, and the rebound to life and hope was almost as overpowering as the first shock had been. But it was not destined to last long. In a few minutes Harold exclaimed, in a voice of terror,—

"But the water is rising still. See! it is rushing all down this gallery now!"

It was too true. Although the first and most terrific rush was now past, the mine was filling rapidly and steadily. The new workings lay at a considerably lower level than the old, and, as a natural consequence, the water continued to pour in a continuous stream through the now useless wall of protection. The boys' last hope was thus extinguished.

"Back again to the room! Quick! Quick!" shouted Percy. "It is higher than the gallery. Perhaps it will escape!"

Back rushed the terrified boys, splashing through the water that now flowed ankle deep and was rising steadily; so terrified were they that they never heard a voice from above shouting down the shaft; their own footsteps and the rush of the water drowned all other sounds, and they were in no state to distinguish one noise from another in the awful fear that had seized upon them.

They gathered together in their little room—the

Digitized by Google

room in which they had taken such pride and pleasure, and the possession of which had led them into so much disobedience and deceit—and threw themselves down on the floor in an agony of apprehension.

It seemed to them as if nothing could save them, but as though they must die by inches, as the cold, pitiless water rose and engulfed them.

"Let us say our prayers," said Harold, in a low, trembling voice. "It is all we can do now."

He knelt down and tried to pray; but his companions could not even do that. If we neglect prayer when there seems no danger hanging over us, we are not likely to be able to turn our thoughts in that channel when death hovers over us and looks us in the face.

Remember that, boys! you who are careless about your prayers, and who think it babyish to pray, and are ashamed of doing so. Think how you would feel, did serious danger threaten you, and then kneel and ask God's pardon for past neglect, and His grace for future guidance.

Harold's prayer comforted him a little; but the other boys crouched together on the floor in a kind of abject despair.

Suddenly all three sprang to their feet with a simultaneous cry almost of terror. Footsteps were approaching their retreat. Some one was rushing and splashing through the water. They stood and held their breath, almost believing that some frightful apparition would be revealed to them.

The next moment Jack came dashing up the steps, panting, breathless, excited. He only paused to shout out,—

Digitized by Google

"Come! come! quick! Follow me!" and then turned and led the way back along the flooded gallery towards the mouth of the shaft.

Trembling with excitement and renewed hope, the boys followed him through the rising water, which now reached their knees, and saw the rope hanging down the shaft—the one connecting link between them and life.

"Up, Harold!" panted Jack. "Up quick! you can climb. It isn't longer than the old gymnasium rope. But be quick!"

Harold flung off his jacket and obeyed without a word. Rope-climbing is not very difficult to a strong and active boy, and when it is the only chance of life, it becomes an easier task than when the motive is less urgent.

Steadily and slowly Harold climbed towards daylight. They watched him mount higher and higher, till at last he reached the crank, swung himself up upon it, and at last with a cheer of triumph stood in safety looking down the shaft.

"Now, Percy," said Jack.

Percy's ascent was less agile, but slow and steady; Harold helped him in the rather difficult task of quitting the rope for the crank; and at last he too stood in safety.

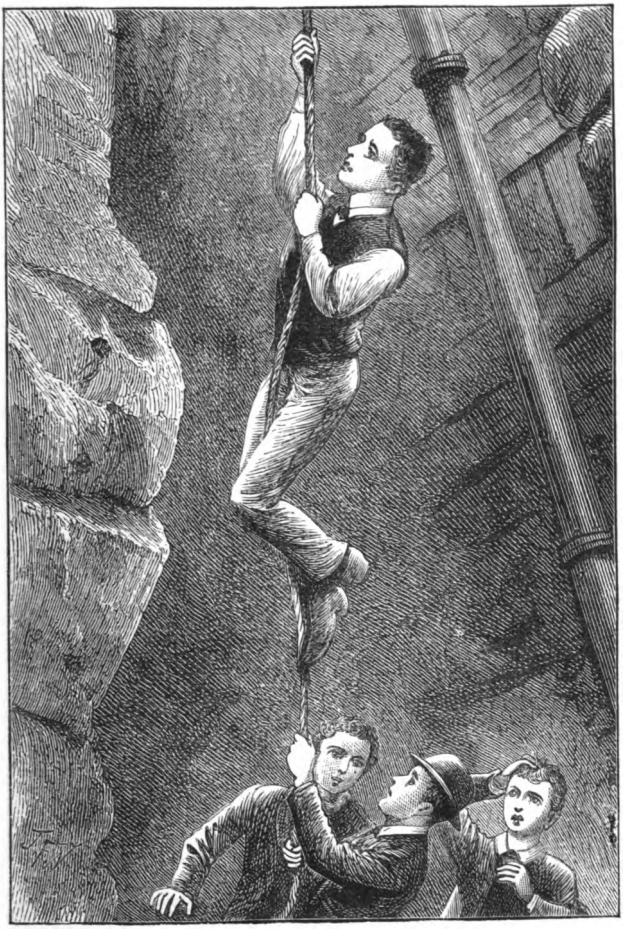
"Now you, Donald," said Jack.

"No, you," answered Donald; "you first."

"I can't climb yet," answered Jack, "I'm too tired. Give me another few minutes. You go now."

Donald did not waste time in argument, for every moment was precious. He seized the rope and went up hand over hand like a brave Jack Tar.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The three boys but lately despairing of life now stood in safety, and shouted eagerly for Jack to come up too. They could only see him dimly as he began the ascent, and he seemed to move very slowly; and by-and-by, to their dismay, he slipped down again, and his voice came faintly up to them,—

"It's no good! I'm too tired, I can't get up anyhow."

A cold dismay fell upon the others. Was their preserver to perish after having saved them all from a terrible death? Harold leaned over, imploring Jack to try again; and Percy said, his face looking grave and pale, and almost stern,—

"If he can't get up, I shall go down again. He shan't die down there alone!"

Donald looked at his brother in amaze.

"You couldn't help him if you did."

"I know, but I shall go, for all that; and you fellows can go for help. It may come in time."

"Stop a bit!" cried Donald, who was more ready of resource than his companions. "I've got a better plan than that. Jack," he shouted, leaning down the shaft, "can you tie a big knot at the end of the rope?"

"I'll try," came Jack's voice back; and by-and-by he called up, "Yes, I've done that."

"Then stand upon it and hold on hard," shouted Donald back; "and now, you fellows, we must pull him up. The crank handle has gone, worse luck, but we must just pull for our lives. The three of us ought to be able to do it."

Donald arranged his men at a short distance rom one another, and then they began steadily to

Digitized by Google

haul up the rope. It was hard work at first, but it grew lighter as their burden neared the top, and not one amongst them relaxed his efforts even for a moment.

At last Jack's head appeared, and a shout of triumph arose as he was safely swung to *terra firma* again.

Then, with a sudden sense of gratitude and relief, the boys stood silent, facing one another, no one able to speak a word.

They were reconciled without a word of reconciliation. Jack had saved their lives, and they had saved his. Was it likely that any ill-feeling could exist between them after that?

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE AND DEATH.

VERY quietly and silently the four boys pursued their homeward way over the wet fields.

Percy spoke once, and said,—

"I'm awfully sorry for the way I treated you, Jack, and the things I said."

And Jack replied readily,—

"Don't let's think any more about it. You see it all turned out for the best. If I had gone on going to the mine, I should most likely have been with you there to-day, and then we should all have been drowned by this time."

The boys shivered involuntarily. It was a terrible thought—that of the danger so narrowly escaped. Donald turned the subject by saying, warmly,—

"And now we shall always be friends. We will never quarrel after this."

"Never!" responded Percy, adding, after a pause, "I wonder if father knew anything about the danger when he forbade us to go there."

It was a new idea, and produced a distinct impression. The boys had fallen into the bad habit of resenting parental authority, and considering

Digitized by Google

every rule harsh, and every prohibition needless tyranny. This sudden discovery of the wisdom and forethought displayed by a restriction they had looked upon as a mere exercise of gratuitous hardness came upon them like a revelation, and they looked at one another in silence, feeling ashamed and repentant.

"When we get home," said Percy, at length, "I shall tell father all about it."

This was such an unusual speech for Percy to make that it roused a good deal of surprise; but all the boys were glad to hear of this resolution, for they felt that until Mr. Fontenore knew all they could not really feel at rest with their own consciences. Harold began to realize now that his own conduct had been far from blameless, and that his mother would never have sanctioned his going to any place which had been forbidden to his companions.

They walked towards The Grange in a disturbed and subdued state of mind, determined to go straight to Mr. Fontenore, and get their confession over; but as they approached they were aware of a certain stir about the house; the doctor's carriage stood at the door, and a servant hurried to meet them as they turned the corner of the drive.

It was one of the maids, and her eyes were red as if with tears, and she said, hurriedly,—

"We have been looking everywhere for you. Master Charley has been asking for you over and over again. Make haste up to his room. He is very ill indeed. They think——"

The girl stopped, and the boys hastened on, too much bewildered to realize what it could all mean.

Digitized by Google

As they mounted the stairs they met the doctor coming down, and he looked gravely at them, and said,—

"Go quietly, boys. You are just in time."

"In time for what?" was the mental question that arose, but they did not give it utterance. Only Jack fully understood the meaning of those words. He knew that they meant that little Charley was dying.

With hushed footsteps and awe-stricken faces the boys stole into the room.

Charley turned his head and looked at them, and then he smiled, as if he were quite satisfied now.

His brothers looked at him, and their hearts seemed to stand still. What had brought that strange look into the familiar face? They felt as if their little brother was already far, far away from them, as though he stood upon the borders of some distant land of which they had never even dreamed.

Mr. and Mrs. Fontenore were on the far side of the bed: she holding the little frail hand, and restraining her tears, so as not to disturb the last moments of the child who had grown so dear to her of late; he grave, and pale, and almost stern in his repressed emotion, feeling that he had never understood the nature of the son who was about to be taken away from them.

Bessie and Veronica, clasped in each other's arms, were sobbing softly behind the bed-curtains. Mr. Fontenore had urged them more than once to go away. He did not think that death was a fit sight for children's eyes, and he wished them away; but

Digitized by Google

Veronica would not be persuaded, neither would she let go her hold round Bessie's neck.

But Mr. Fontenore was wrong in thinking that there was anything to shock or frighten even children's minds in the sudden fading away of the little frail life of his youngest child. Strong and wise man as he was, he had yet one deep lesson to learn from the little son he had looked upon as a mere baby.

God's ways are not our ways. He often uses the weak and feeble things of this world to confound the strong and mighty.

Two hours ago a sudden change had passed over Charley, and the nurse, in great alarm, had summoned help, and the doctor had come in haste. One glance at the child told him that the end was very near, and this verdict was at once communicated to the anxious parents.

As they had mounted to their son's room Mr. Fontenore had said to his wife,—

"Whatever you do, do not let the boy know the truth. There is no need he should ever be terrified by the knowledge that he is dying. Let him pass away in ignorance of his condition."

Mrs. Fontenore could not speak; but she knew well that death had no terrors now for the feeble little boy. He could face calmly what many strong men would shrink from—he had learned that death was only the gate to everlasting life.

When they entered the quiet room Charley met them with a smile that was in itself a revelation to his father.

"Does he know?" he asked, softly, of the doctor.

Digitized by Google

"He does. He knew without any telling, and he has no fear."

No fear! Mr. Fontenore was a brave man, yet if he were now called upon to face death, he could not do it as calmly and fearlessly as his little son was now doing. He knew that, and marvelled at it. Was it ignorance, childishness, thoughtlessness that kept Charley so unmoved? One glance at the face on the pillow gave an emphatic negative to these questions.

The child was unable to speak. Prostration, utter and complete, robbed him for a time of all but bare consciousness; but he knew those about him, and once or twice he faintly whispered the names of his brothers, and that of his favourite, Jack.

The doctor, his skill of no avail here, took his leave at length, and almost at once the door again opened and admitted the four boys. Their faces were pale and grave, but that excited no astonishment under the circumstances; and the soaked state of their lower garments passed unnoticed. All thoughts were for Charley now—for the little boy who was with them still, but who would so soon be gone away—who could say whither?

The boys looked at him with awe.

An hour ago they, too, had been looking death in the face—and oh, how unspeakably terrible it had been! To two of the boys the horror had been beyond anything of which they had ever dreamed, and only one out of the four had been able to face the thought with any strength or courage.

Yet here lay this little frail brother of theirs—

Digitized by Google

the one who had always been so weak, so timid, so helpless—and he lay calm and happy and content, even while the angel of death hovered over him, and he must surely feel the cold approach of its icy hand.

Father and sons were alike astonished. What had given little Charley this courage?

"My boy," said Mr. Fontenore, bending over him, "you are not afraid to die?"

Charley smiled, and shook his head.

A great wish surged through the strong man's heart to learn the secret of this strength.

"Charley," he said, "can you tell us why you are not afraid? Do you know where you are going?"

Another of those strange, radiant smiles. The boy rallied his strength, and spoke,—

"Oh yes, I know; 'In My Father's house are many mansions.' I am going there."

"How can you know that, my boy?"

The dark eyes fastened on him with a look of astonishment.

"Jesus said so. He said, 'I go to prepare a place for you. I will receive you unto Myself.' Jesus said that."

"And that is enough for you?" asked the father, staggered by the simple faith of the child. The promise that meant so much to the one seemed so vague and visionary to the other.

"Enough!" echoed Charley, clasping his hands. "Why, when Jesus died to win that beautiful home for us, isn't that enough?"

"Charley," said Percy, stepping forward suddenly. At another time, questions like these would

Digitized by Google

never have entered his head, but the recollections still fresh in his mind of the awful peril just escaped, gave to them a peculiar and personal significance, such as had never troubled him before. "Charley, is that home prepared for all of us? Shall we all go there when we die?"

"It is made for us all," answered Charley, "and we have to choose if we will take it or not."

"What do you mean?"

"We have to choose whether we will belong to Jesus. If we do, He will take us home by-and-by."

"How can we belong to Him?"

"By loving Him," was the simple answer "that's how."

"Is that all?"

"Yes—at least—I mean—if you love Him, the rest will come of itself."

The boys were much moved. It was so hard to realize that Charley was dying; so hard to grasp the meaning of the words he spoke. They would have given anything to have kept him with them, but they knew that he must go.

"I'm not good enough to go where you're going," cried Percy, with sudden and genuine distress. "I'm too bad even to love God!"

Charley heard the new ring of pain in his brother's voice, and roused all his little remnant of strength to try and comfort him.

"That's what the publican thought, you know, Percy. He didn't dare to look up to heaven. He only could say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' And yet Jesus loved him better than the other man who seemed so good. Jesus is never angry

Digitized by Google

with us for sins, if we are really sorry. He knows, and He understands, and takes them all away."

Charley paused, this long speech had exhausted him; but to the children gathered round him it seemed as if he spoke by some direct revelation. No words from books or from teachers or parents could come home to them with half the force that these broken phrases did from the lips of their dying brother.

"Tell us some more, Charley; tell us some more," cried Donald. "Oh, I do want to be good. I will try so hard now."

"Yes, try," answered Charley, faintly; "but don't try alone, or you never can. Ask God for His Holy Spirit. He will help you. Oh, do try all to come to the beautiful home. I shall watch for you there."

He lay silent a long while after that. Most of the children were in tears, and could not speak. Presently he looked at Jack, and said,—

"Good-bye, Jack. Give my love to your mother. It is all her doing—hers and yours—that I am so happy. When I get home, I shall tell God all about it."

Then, looking at his brothers, he added,—

"Jack knows—Jack can teach you—he taught me."

After that came another long silence. The shadows of evening were beginning to steal into the quiet room, and one ray of golden sunshine quivered on the blind like a shaft of light.

"I should like to look out once again," said little Charley.

Donald drew up the blind, and the dying child

Digitized by Google

looked out once more upon the scenes so strangely familiar to his eye. Could it be that he would never see them more?

The spring had merged into summer now, and the trees with their full foliage spoke of the season of perfect life and promise renewed and fulfilled.

Did it seem now a strange, sad mystery to the little boy that he should be called upon to leave a world that was just putting on its full beauty and gladness? What likeness could now be traced between his fading life and the joyous world of nature without?

Suddenly a wonderfully bright smile shone over his face, and his eye sought Jack's. Jack had been the recipient of many of his fancies before now.

"I understand it all now," he whispered. "Winter, and spring, and summer. It is like our lives—just to show us a little what it will be like." He looked again out of the window at the fading gold of the sunset. "Isn't it lovely? But it is going away. I am going after it. It will be much more beautiful there. And you will all come—father, mother, Veronica—all of you. Oh, I know you will all come. It is not a hard way, or I never should have found it. Jesus is the Way; that is all."

His voice died away then, and he closed his eyes as if in sleep. A change passed slowly over his face, and its lines seemed to grow more sharp and clear, but the peaceful look only deepened there.

Once his lips moved, and his mother bent over him to try and catch the words.

Digitized by Google

"'In My Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you.'"

That was the last thought in little Charley's mind when God's angel lifted him up, and carried him over the dark river that men call death.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

"WHEN you forgive us, father?"

"Freely, my boys."

"We mean to try very hard to be more obedient for the future."

Percy spoke in a manly way that pleased his father; and Mr. Fontenore had been much more approachable since Charley's death. Perhaps the loss of one son had drawn him more closely to the other two. After the first shock of their grief had passed, and they had opportunity to think of other things, Donald and Percy had both agreed that they would confess to their father the whole of their offence in the matter of the mine, and would tell him of their peril and escape. This they had done, and had received full forgiveness.

"For the future," said Mr. Fontenore, his stern face relaxing into a smile, "I hope we shall understand each other better, and be better friends."

The boys thought this probable, for already a new and warmer feeling seemed stealing through the house that had once seemed so little of a "home" to those who dwelt there. Every morning now the household assembled together whilst

Digitized by Google

a portion of God's Word was read, and His blessing asked upon the labours of the day. It seemed, perhaps, but a small thing, this short daily service, but yet was it so small a point? Did it not show that God was recognised as the head of the house and family, as He had never been before? And is that recognition of God's fatherhood a small or trifling matter?

The children did not now dread a summons to their parents' presence. Little Veronica had already become her mother's constant companion out of lesson hours; and even Miss Ansty had become almost like a friend to her, by the unexpected kindness and sympathy she had shown towards her little pupil in her grief at her brother's death.

Everything seemed established on a better footing than of old, and, now that the boys had told their father of their most deliberate act of disobedience, they were much more happy and satisfied.

"Where is Jack?" asked Mr. Fontenore, as the interview came to an end. "Didn't I see him out in the garden just now?"

"Yes; he came over to bring Bessie to play with Veronica."

"Well, send him here to me. I want to speak to him alone."

The boys ran off, and Mr. Fontenore was left to himself. He appreciated the heroism and devotion of Jack's rescue of his sons better than they did themselves; and the knowledge that but for the lad's bravery he would at the present moment be mourning the loss of three sons, made him feel

Digitized by Google

very warmly towards the gallant little fellow who had spared him this great grief, and that at risk of his own life. His meditations were interrupted by the entrance of Jack himself.

"My boy," he said, kindly, seating himself and drawing Jack towards him, "you have saved the lives of my boys, and I want to thank you for it."

Jack coloured vividly.

"Harold was down there, too, sir. I'm really not *quite* sure if I should have gone if it hadn't been for that. I hope I should; but I can't be quite sure."

Mr. Fontenore smiled at the boy's honesty.

"Well, that is a little beyond the mark. My business is not with what you might have done, but with what you did. I owe to you the lives of my two sons, and I cannot be satisfied until I have done something towards lightening the debt of gratitude which I shall always carry about with me. What would you like, boy? You are fond of horses, and of riding. Would you like a horse of your own, to be always kept at my expense and in my stable so long as we live so near, but entirely at your disposal?"

Jack's eyes glowed for a moment, the proposal was a tempting one; but in a few moments the light died out, and he answered in a quiet, manly way,—

"You are very kind, sir, and it would be jolly to have a horse; but if you don't mind, I'd much rather have something that would be useful to mother. You know we are not rich, and I want to help her all I can, and it's so little I can do before I grow up."

Mr. Fontenore looked gravely into the boy's

Digitized by Google

face, and seemed to be thinking deeply. At length he spoke again.

"My lad," he said, "you speak like one who has the making of a man in him. I am proud of you, and you shall have your wish. Run home and tell your mother that I shall hope to have the honour of calling upon her to-morrow afternoon to talk to her about your education and start in life."

From Mr. Fontenore this meant much; and after half an hour's quiet talk Jack learned what his generous benefactor's intentions really implied.

He ran home in a state of great excitement; and when his mother and Bessie heard the news, they were as much astonished and excited as he was, even if they did not show it in the same exuberant fashion.

"I shall be able to help mother now!" cried Jack, jumping about the room, to "let off steam," as he called it. "I shan't cost her a penny for clothes, or books, or schooling, or anything, except in the holidays, and I shall go to a big school with other boys; and when I grow up I shall have something to do, so that I can get on and help mother. We shall be rich then, Bessie, and we'll go away from here. I shall buy a great big beautiful house somewhere for you and mother to live in, and I shall come and see you as often as business will allow. And Harold will be a man then, and he'll come too, when he can, and we'll all be happy together. Won't it be delightful to see mother driving about in her own carriage, just as she used to do, and never having to do any more mending or patching, or anything nasty and dis-

Digitized by Google

agreeable? Oh, I do so wish I could be grown up straight off!"

And Jack flung his arms round his mother's neck, and hugged her almost out of breath.

"Shan't we be happy then, mother?"

"Aren't we happy now, my little Jack?"

His face looked suddenly grave and earnest.

"Oh yes," he answered, quickly, "always happy when we have you, mother darling. And, mother, I don't mean ever to forget, whatever happens, that it isn't the house that makes the home; nor that the *real* home is not here at all; but up there in heaven, where we must all try to find it—where Charley is, you know, in the place Jesus has prepared for us all."

THE END.

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOKS FOR PRESENTS

PUBLISHED BY THE

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE'S NEW BOOK.

SNOW-SHOE CLUB IN INDIAN FILE. [*Reduced from*

CANADIAN PICTURES. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rt. Hon. the MARQUIS of LORNE, K.G., late Governor-General of Canada. Uniform with "English Pictures," "French Pictures," etc. Illustrated with Engravings from Sketches by the Author, Sidney Hall, and others. Imperial 8vo. 8s. handsomely bound in cloth, gilt edges; or in morocco, 25s. *The new volume of the Pen and Pencil Series.*

Digitized by Google

Publications of the

NEW BOOK.

MRS. O. F. WALTON.

dows. Scenes in the Life an Old Arm-Chair. By Mrs. O. F. WALTON. Illustrated. 4s. cloth, gilt edges.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

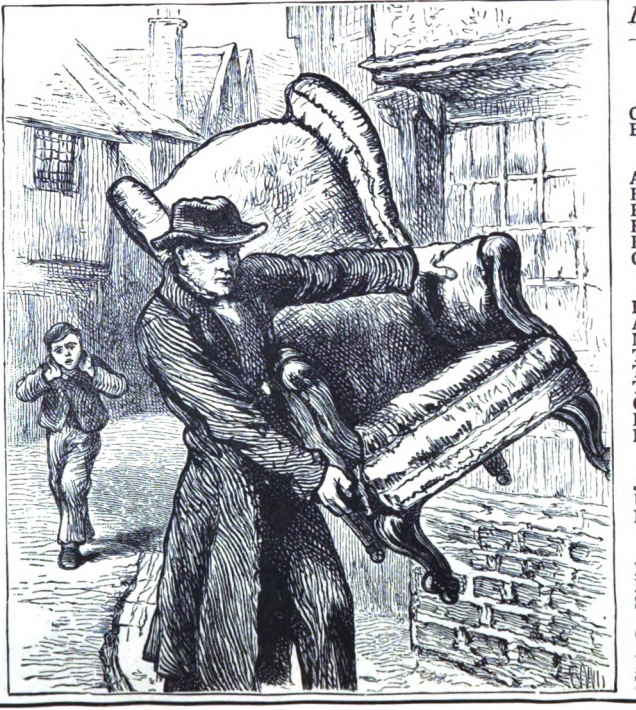
Each with Engravings.

A Peep Behind the Scenes. 3s. 6d. Cheap Edition, 3d.
Was I Right? 3s. 6d.
Olive's Story; or, Life at Ravenscliffe. 2s. 6d.
Saved at Sea. A Lighthouse Story. 1s. 6d.
My Little Corner. A Book for Cottage Homes. 1s. 6d.
My Mates and I. 1s. 6d.
Christie's Old Organ; or, Home, Sweet Home. 1s.
Little Faith; or, The Child of the Toy Stall. 1s.
Nobody Loves Me. 1s.
Little Dot. 6d.

FOR THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Walking with Jesus.
The Lilies of the Field.
The Children's King.
Readings with the Little Ones. By AGNES GIBERNE.
The Beautiful House and its Seven Pillars.

In very Large Type, 1s. 6d. *each. With Illustrations.*



Religious Tract Society.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

Each with Engravings.

Cobwebs and Cables. 5s.
Bede's Charity. 3s. 6d.

2s. each.

A Thorny Path.
Pilgrim Street.
Enoch Roden's Training.
Fern's Hollow.
Fishers of Derby Haven.
Children of Cloverley.

1s. 6d. each.

Little Meg's Children.
Alone in London.
Max Kromer.
The Crew of the Dolphin.
The King's Servants.
The Storm of Life.
Cassy.
Friends till Death, etc.
Michel Lorio's Cross, etc.

1s. each.

Jessica's First Prayer.
Under the Old Roof.
No Place like Home.

6d. each.

Friends till Death.
Michel Lorio's Cross.
Sam Franklin's Savings-Bank.
Old Transome.
A Night and a Day.
A Man of his Word.
The Worth of a Baby.

RECENT BIOGRAPHY.

Leaders in Modern Philanthropy. By the Rev. W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D. With Fifteen Fine Portraits. Cloth boards, 5s.

The object of these Biographical Sketches is to show that the great leaders in modern philanthropic labours have been true Christians, and that their Christianity was the mainspring and support of their self-denying toil.

St. Augustine: His Life and Times. By the Rev. R. WHELER BUSH, M.A., Rector of St. Alphage, London Wall, and Author of "An Introduction to the Pentateuch," etc. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

"A well-written account of the great man."—*Guardian.*

Luther Anecdotes: Memorable Sayings and Doings of Martin Luther. Gathered from his Books, Letters, and History. By Dr. MACAULAY, Editor of "The Leisure Hour." With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

"A charming little book, not too big, not dull."—*Churchman.*

The Life of Jean Frederic Oberlin, Pastor of the Ban de la Roche. By Mrs. JOSEPHINE E. BUTLER. Illustrated. With Map of the Ban de la Roche. 3s. 6d. cloth.

Religious Topography of England. By S. R. PATTISON. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

"Here we have a sort of *Holy Gazetteer.* Places are mentioned alphabetically, and those incidents mentioned which give them a religious history. This makes a most interesting volume."—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Life and Times of Wycliffe. With Portrait, Illustrations, and Facsimile of Wycliffe's Bible. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Wycliffe Anecdotes, Compiled by the Rev. S. G. GREEN, D.D. Portrait and Illustrations. 16mo. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

The Life of Hannah More. A Lady of Two Centuries. By ANNA J. BUCKLAND. With Portraits. Imperial 16mo. 3s. cloth boards.

Worthies of Science. Memoirs of Christian Scientific Men. By the Rev. JOHN STOUGHTON, D.D., Author of "Homes and Haunts of Luther," "Footprints of Italian Reformers," etc. Crown 8vo. 4s. cloth boards.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

Reduced from "Leaders in Modern Philanthropy."

Short Biographies for the People. Contains Biographies and Portraits of Luther, Calvin, Farel, Melancthon, Rollock, Wycliffe, Anselm, Wesley, Durer, Dr. Johnson, Knox, and John Hus. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

Well fitted for family reading, for school libraries and prizes.

RECENT MISSIONARY BOOKS.

The History of Protestant Missions in India from their Commencement, in 1706, to 1882. By the Rev. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LL.B. Newly Revised and brought down to date, by the Rev. E. STORROW, formerly of Benares. With four Maps. Crown 8vo. 6s. cloth boards.

The only complete sketch of the history and present state of Missions in India.

[*Reduced from*

The Mela at Tulsipur. Glimpses of Missionary Life and Work in India. By the Rev. B. H. BADLEY, M.A. 4s. cloth gilt.

Melas are great heathen religious festivals held in many parts of India, and frequented by great multitudes.

Among the Mongols. By the Rev. JAMES GILMOUR, M.A., of Pekin. With Map and numerous Engravings. Fourth Thousand. 6s. cloth.

Short Chapters on Buddhism Past and Present. By the Right Rev. J. H. TITCOMB, D.D., First Bishop of Rangoon. 3s. cloth boards.

Our Eastern Sisters, and their Missionary Helpers. By HARRIET WARNER ELLIS. 2s. 6d. cloth. "A very interesting book."—*Queen.*

Mahomet and Islam. A Sketch of the Prophet's Life, from original sources, and a Brief Outline of his Religion. By Sir WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I., LL.D., D.C.L., formerly Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces of India; Author of "The Life of Mahomet," "Annals of the Early Caliphate," etc. Illustrations and a large Map of Arabia. Crown 8vo. 4s. cloth boards.

ILLUSTRATED TABLE BOOKS.

8/- each.

In cloth, gilt edges.

Or 25/- handsomely bound in morocco, extra.

See also the MARQUIS OF LORNE'S New Book on page 1 of this List.

English Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D., and the Rev. S. G. GREEN, D.D. With Coloured Frontispiece and numerous Wood Engravings.

Sea Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By JAMES MACAULAY, M.A., M.D., Editor of the "Leisure Hour," etc. *Mr. RUSKIN says: "This beautiful book is far the best I have ever seen on its subject."*

Scottish Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By Dr. S. G. GREEN. Profusely Illustrated. "This volume will be prized in Scotland as an evidence of what Scotland is, and out of Scotland as affording knowledge of places and of scenery of singular beauty."—*Scotsman.* "An excellent book for the drawing-room table."—*St. James's Gazette.*

Pictures from the German Fatherland. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rev. SAMUEL G. GREEN, D.D. With fine Engravings.

French Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rev. SAMUEL G. GREEN, D.D. With 150 fine Engravings.

American Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. New Edition. Profusely Illustrated.

Swiss Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D.

Indian Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rev. WILLIAM URWICK, M.A. Profusely Illustrated with fine Engravings.

Italian Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. New Edition. Revised. Profusely Illustrated.

"Those Holy Fields." Palestine Illustrated by Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. With numerous Engravings.

The Land of the Pharaohs. Egypt and Sinai. Illustrated by Pen and Pencil. By Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. With fine Engravings.

Pictures from Bible Lands. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. Edited by the Rev. S. G. GREEN, D.D. With fine Engravings.

NEW ILLUSTRATED STORY BOOKS.

THE "SUNFLOWERS" SERIES.

A series of books intended for adults rather than children. In this series an attempt will be made to supply books which shall not only interest as well-written stories that afford studies of character and descriptions of events and scenes likely to rivet the attention, but which shall also stimulate serious thought, and develop the better nature of those who shall read them.

Sunflowers. A Story of To-day. By G. C. GEDGE. With Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

Carola. By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Jessica's First Prayer," etc. With Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

Lenore Annandale's Story. By E. EVERETT GREEN, Author of "Paul Harvard's Campaign," etc. With Five Illustrations by WHYMPER. Crown 8vo. Cloth boards, 5s.

The Doctor's Experiment. By the Author of "Under Fire," etc. With Illustrations. 5s. cloth gilt.

A story of schoolboy life, full of incident.

Luther and Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz. A Historic-Biographical Tale. Given in English by JULIE SUTTER. With Portraits. Crown 8vo. 5s. cloth boards.

Boy and Man: A Story for Old and Young. With numerous Illustrations by FRENCH. 4s. Imperial 16mo. Cloth gilt.

Straight to the Mark. A Story for Old and Young. By the Rev. T. S. MILLINGTON, M.A., Author of "Boy and Man," etc. Illustrations. 5s. Imperial 16mo. Gilt edges.

Reduced from "Lenore Annandale's Story."

Within Sea Walls; or, How the Dutch kept the Faith. By ELIZABETH H. WALSHE and GEO. E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. A most interesting historical tale. 4s. 6d. cloth gilt.

Digitized by Google

3/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

Saxby: A Tale of the Commonwealth Time. By EMMA LESLIE. Illustrated. Cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

An interesting historical tale.

Wind and Wave fulfilling His Word. A Story of the Siege of Leyden, 1574. By HARRIETTE E. BURCH. With Engravings. 3s. 6d. cloth gilt.

A very good historical story.

Dearer than Life. A Story of the Times of Wycliffe. By EMMA LESLIE, Author of "At the Sign of the Blue Boar," "Saxby," etc. With Illustrations. Imperial 16mo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Apples and Oranges: Familiar Talks with Children on Fruits. By Mrs. DYSON, author of "Children's Flowers," etc. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Seven Steps Upward. By M. E. ROPES and SALEM HALL. With Seven Illustrations. Cloth boards, gilt edges, 3s. 6d. A series of tales for young people by two well-known writers.

Ellen Tremaine; or, The Poem without an Ending. By MARIANNE FILLEUL. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

An interesting story of life in a West Country fishing village, and of adventures on the ocean and in Australia.

Reduced from "Wind and Wave fulfilling His Word."

4/- EACH.

Lost in Egypt. A Story from Life. By Miss M. L. WHATELY. 4s. cloth gilt.

Children of India. Written for the Children of England by one of their Friends. With Illustrations and Map. 4s. gilt edges.

Under Fire; being the Story of a Boy's Battles against Himself and other Enemies. Illustrated. 4s. gilt edges.

3/- EACH.

Through the Linn; or, Miss Temple's Wards. By AGNES GIBERNE. 3s. With Engravings, cloth gilt.

Hid in the Cevennes; or, The Mountain Refuge. A Story of a French Protestant Girl. With Illustrations. 3s. cloth, gilt.

Once upon a Time; or, The Boy's Book of Adventures. 3s. cloth.

Digitized by Google

2/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Sure Harvest. By Mrs. COOTE. A useful and interesting Story for Girls. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Three Christmas Eves. By the Author of "The Cottage on the Shore," etc. Illustrated. 2s. 6d. cloth gilt.

Elliott Malcolm's Chronicle. The Story of a Scotch Lassie. With Engravings. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.
An excellent gift-book for servants.

Angel Meadow. By the Author of "Field Court." Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Boys will be Boys. By GEORGE E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

Alfred Arnold's Choice, and what Came of it. A Tale of Factory Life. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Elsie's Footprints; or, Jesus your Life, and your Life for Jesus. By Mrs. LUCAS SHADWELL. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

The Moth and the Candle; or, Lucy Woodville's Temptation. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Old Anthony's Secret. By SARAH DOUDNEY. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

An Old Sailor's Story. By GEORGE E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

Reduced from "The Sure Harvest."

The Master's Service. A Practical Guide for Girls. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Ivy's Armour. With Engravings. Illustrating Eph. vi. 13-17. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Free to Serve. A Young Servant's Story. By E. R. GARRATT. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Golden Sheaves; or, Grace Reynold's Work for the Master. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Children's Daily Bread. Picture, Text, and Verse for every Day. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Olive's Story; or, Life at Ravenscliffe. By Mrs. O. F. WALTON. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Digitized by Google

2/- ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Secret Room. By Miss POCKLINGTON. Illustrated. 2s. cloth boards.
An unusually well-written story of the time of Queen Mary. The tale is well conceived and the little book is full of valuable reading.

In London Fields. A Story of the Lights and Shadows of a Child's Life. By EGLANTON THORNE. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.
A simple, unpretending story of a child's experiences in the East of London.

Reduced from "In London Fields."

Hester Lennox; or, Seeking a Life Motto. By HOWE BENNING, Author of "Quiet Corners," etc. With Illustrations. An interesting book for thoughtful Girls. 2s. cloth.

Drierstock. A Tale of Mission Work on the American Frontier. 2s. cloth.

God's Gifts to Two; or, Margaret Redfern's Discipline. 2s. cloth.

Paul Harvard's Campaign. Illustrated. 2s. cloth.

Great Voyagers. Their Adventures and Discoveries. 2s. cloth.

Hampered. A Tale of American Family Life. By Mrs. A. K. DUNNING. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.
Showing how the cares and temptations of life hamper a family, and how best overcome.

Polly's Petition. By Mrs. CLARKE, Author of "Jenny's Corner," etc. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.

The Day after To-morrow. By Mrs. PROSSER. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth.

Little Wavie, the Foundling of Glenderg. By CRONA TEMPLE. 2s. cloth.

Sunday Pictures for the Little Ones. With Eighty-four Coloured Pictures. 2s. cloth gilt.

City Sparrows, and who cared for them. By RUTH LYNN. 2s. cloth.

Clarice Egerton's Life Story. By A. LYSTER. 2s. cloth.

Bible Picture Stories. Full of Coloured Pictures. 2s. cloth gilt.

Digitized by Google

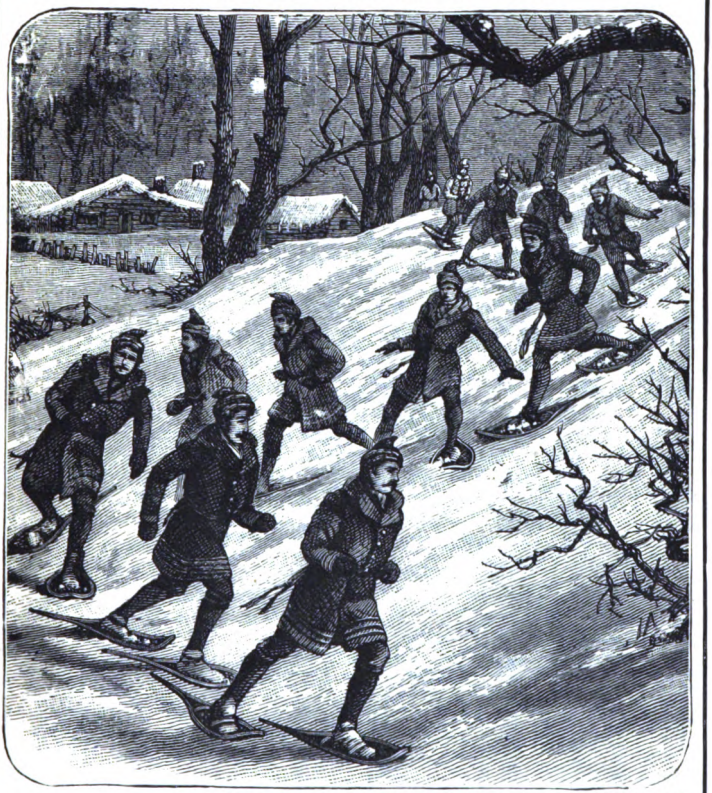
Digitized by Google

BOOKS FOR PRESENTS

PUBLISHED BY THE

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE'S NEW BOOK.



SNOW-SHOE CLUB IN INDIAN FILE. [*Reduced from*

CANADIAN PICTURES. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rt. Hon. the MARQUIS of LORNE, K.G., late Governor-General of Canada. Uniform with "English Pictures," "French Pictures," etc. Illustrated with Engravings from Sketches by the Author, Sidney Hall, and others. Imperial 8vo. 8s. handsomely bound in cloth, gilt edges; or in morocco, 25s. *The new volume of the Pen and Pencil Series.*

Digitized by Google

Publications of the

NEW BOOK.

BY MRS. O. F. WALTON.

Shadows. Scenes in the Life of an Old Arm-Chair. By Mrs. O. F. WALTON. Illustrated. 4s. cloth, gilt edges.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Each with Engravings.

A Peep Behind the Scenes. 3s. 6d. Cheap Edition, 3d.
Was I Right? 3s. 6d.
Olive's Story; or, Life at Ravenscliffe. 2s. 6d.
Saved at Sea. A Lighthouse Story. 1s. 6d.
My Little Corner. A Book for Cottage Homes. 1s. 6d.
My Mates and I. 1s. 6d.
Christie's Old Organ; or, Home, Sweet Home. 1s.
Little Faith; or, The Child of the Toy Stall. 1s.
Nobody Loves Me. 1s.
Little Dot. 6d.

FOR THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Walking with Jesus.
The Lilies of the Field.
The Children's King.
Readings with the Little Ones. By AGNES GIBERNE.
The Beautiful House and its Seven Pillars.

In very Large Type, 1s. 6d. each. With Illustrations.

Religious Tract Society.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

Each with Engravings.

Cobwebs and Cables. 5s.
Bede's Charity. 3s. 6d.

2s. each.

A Thorny Path.
Pilgrim Street.
Enoch Roden's Training.
Fern's Hollow.
Fishers of Derby Haven.
Children of Cloverley.

1s. 6d. each.

Little Meg's Children.
Alone in London.
Max Kromer.
The Crew of the Dolphin.
The King's Servants.
The Storm of Life.
Cassy.
Friends till Death, etc.
Michel Lorio's Cross, etc.

1s. each.

Jessica's First Prayer.
Under the Old Roof.
No Place like Home.

6d. each.

Friends till Death.
Michel Lorio's Cross.
Sam Franklin's Savings-Bank.
Old Transome.
A Night and a Day.
A Man of his Word.
The Worth of a Baby.

RECENT BIOGRAPHY.

Leaders in Modern Philanthropy. By the Rev. W. G. BLAIKIE, D.D. With Fifteen Fine Portraits. Cloth boards, 5s.

The object of these Biographical Sketches is to show that the great leaders in modern philanthropic labours have been true Christians, and that their Christianity was the mainspring and support of their self-denying toil.

St. Augustine: His Life and Times. By the Rev. R. WHELER BUSH, M.A., Rector of St. Alphage, London Wall, and Author of "An Introduction to the Pentateuch," etc. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

"A well-written account of the great man."—*Guardian.*

Luther Anecdotes: Memorable Sayings and Doings of Martin Luther. Gathered from his Books, Letters, and History. By Dr. MACAULAY, Editor of "The Leisure Hour." With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

"A charming little book, not too big, not dull."—*Churchman.*

The Life of Jean Frederic Oberlin, Pastor of the Ban de la Roche. By Mrs. JOSEPHINE E. BUTLER. Illustrated. With Map of the Ban de la Roche. 3s. 6d. cloth.

Religious Topography of England. By S. R. PATTISON. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

"Here we have a sort of *Holy Gazetteer*. Places are mentioned alphabetically, and those incidents mentioned which give them a religious history. This makes a most interesting volume."—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Life and Times of Wycliffe. With Portrait, Illustrations, and Facsimile of Wycliffe's Bible. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Wycliffe Anecdotes, Compiled by the Rev. S. G. GREEN, D.D. Portrait and Illustrations. 16mo. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

The Life of Hannah More. A Lady of Two Centuries. By ANNA J. BUCKLAND. With Portraits. Imperial 16mo. 3s. cloth boards.

Worthies of Science. Memoirs of Christian Scientific Men. By the Rev. JOHN STOUGHTON, D.D., Author of "Homes and Haunts of Luther," "Footprints of Italian Reformers," etc. Crown 8vo. 4s. cloth boards.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

Reduced from "Leaders in Modern Philanthropy."

Short Biographies for the People. Contains Biographies and Portraits of Luther, Calvin, Farel, Melancthon, Rollock, Wycliffe, Anselm, Wesley, Durer, Dr. Johnson, Knox, and John Hus. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

Well fitted for family reading, for school libraries and prizes.

RECENT MISSIONARY BOOKS.

The History of Protestant Missions in India from their Commencement, in 1706, to 1882. By the Rev. M. A. SHERRING, M.A., LL.B. Newly Revised and brought down to date, by the Rev. E. STORROW, formerly of Benares. With four Maps. Crown 8vo. 6s. cloth boards.

The only complete sketch of the history and present state of Missions in India.

[*Reduced from*

The Mela at Tulsipur. Glimpses of Missionary Life and Work in India. By the Rev. B. H. BADLEY, M.A. 4s. cloth gilt.

Melas are great heathen religious festivals held in many parts of India, and frequented by great multitudes.

Among the Mongols. By the Rev. JAMES GILMOUR, M.A., of Pekin. With Map and numerous Engravings. Fourth Thousand. 6s. cloth.

Short Chapters on Buddhism Past and Present. By the Right Rev. J. H. TITCOMB, D.D., First Bishop of Rangoon. 3s. cloth boards.

Our Eastern Sisters, and their Missionary Helpers. By HARRIET WARNER ELLIS. 2s. 6d. cloth. "A very interesting book."—*Queen.*

Mahomet and Islam. A Sketch of the Prophet's Life, from original sources, and a Brief Outline of his Religion. By Sir WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I., LL.D., D.C.L., formerly Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces of India; Author of "The Life of Mahomet," "Annals of the Early Caliphate," etc. With Illustrations and a large Map of Arabia. Crown 8vo. 4s. cloth boards.

ILLUSTRATED TABLE BOOKS.

8/- each.

In cloth, gilt edges.

Or 25/- handsomely bound in morocco, extra.

See also the MARQUIS OF LORNE'S New Book on page 1 of this List.

English Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D., and the Rev. S. G. GREEN, D.D. With Coloured Frontispiece and numerous Wood Engravings.

Sea Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By JAMES MACAULAY, M.A., M.D., Editor of the "Leisure Hour," etc. *Mr. RUSKIN says: "This beautiful book is far the best I have ever seen on its subject."*

Scottish Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By Dr. S. G. GREEN. Profusely Illustrated. "This volume will be prized in Scotland as an evidence of what Scotland is, and out of Scotland as affording knowledge of places and of scenery of singular beauty."—*Scotsman.* "An excellent book for the drawing-room table."—*St. James's Gazette.*

Pictures from the German Fatherland. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rev. SAMUEL G. GREEN, D.D. With fine Engravings.

French Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rev. SAMUEL G. GREEN, D.D. With 150 fine Engravings.

American Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. New Edition. Profusely Illustrated.

Swiss Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D.

Indian Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the Rev. WILLIAM URWICK, M.A. Profusely Illustrated with fine Engravings.

Italian Pictures. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. New Edition. Revised. Profusely Illustrated.

"Those Holy Fields." Palestine Illustrated by Pen and Pencil. By the late Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. With numerous Engravings.

The Land of the Pharaohs. Egypt and Sinai. Illustrated by Pen and Pencil. By Rev. SAMUEL MANNING, LL.D. With fine Engravings.

Pictures from Bible Lands. Drawn with Pen and Pencil. Edited by the Rev. S. G. GREEN, D.D. With fine Engravings.

NEW ILLUSTRATED STORY BOOKS.

THE "SUNFLOWERS" SERIES.

A series of books intended for adults rather than children. In this series an attempt will be made to supply books which shall not only interest as well-written stories that afford studies of character and descriptions of events and scenes likely to rivet the attention, but which shall also stimulate serious thought, and develop the better nature of those who shall read them.

Sunflowers. A Story of To-day. By G. C. GEDGE. With Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

Carola. By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Jessica's First Prayer," etc. With Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

Lenore Annandale's Story. By E. EVERETT GREEN, Author of "Paul Harvard's Campaign," etc. With Five Illustrations by WHYMPER. Crown 8vo. Cloth boards, 5s.

Reduced from "Lenore Annandale's Story."

The Doctor's Experiment. By the Author of "Under Fire," etc. With Illustrations. 5s. cloth gilt.

A story of schoolboy life, full of incident.

Luther and Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz. A Historic-Biographical Tale. Given in English by JULIE SUTTER. With Portraits. Crown 8vo. 5s. cloth boards.

Boy and Man: A Story for Old and Young. With numerous Illustrations by FRENCH. 4s. Imperial 16mo. Cloth gilt.

Straight to the Mark. A Story for Old and Young. By the Rev. T. S. MILLINGTON, M.A., Author of "Boy and Man," etc. Illustrations. 5s. Imperial 16mo. Gilt edges.

Within Sea Walls; or, How the Dutch kept the Faith. By ELIZABETH H. WALSHE and GEO. E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. A most interesting historical tale. 4s. 6d. cloth gilt.

Digitized by Google

3/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

Saxby: A Tale of the Commonwealth Time. By EMMA LESLIE. Illustrated. Cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

An interesting historical tale.

Wind and Wave fulfilling His Word. A Story of the Siege of Leyden, 1574. By HARRIETTE E. BURCH. With Engravings. 3s. 6d. cloth gilt.

A very good historical story.

Dearer than Life. A Story of the Times of Wycliffe. By EMMA LESLIE, Author of "At the Sign of the Blue Boar," "Saxby," etc. With Illustrations. Imperial 16mo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Apples and Oranges: Familiar Talks with Children on Fruits. By Mrs. DYSON, author of "Children's Flowers," etc. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Seven Steps Upward. By M. E. ROPES and SALEM HALL. With Seven Illustrations. Cloth boards, gilt edges, 3s. 6d. A series of tales for young people by two well-known writers.

Ellen Tremaine; or, The Poem without an Ending. By MARIANNE FILLEUL. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

An interesting story of life in a West Country fishing village, and of adventures on the ocean and in Australia.

Reduced from "Wind and Wave fulfilling His Word."

4/- EACH.

Lost in Egypt. A Story from Life. By Miss M. L. WHATELY. 4s. cloth gilt.

Children of India. Written for the Children of England by one of their Friends. With Illustrations and Map. 4s. gilt edges.

Under Fire; being the Story of a Boy's Battles against Himself and other Enemies. Illustrated. 4s. gilt edges.

3/- EACH.

Through the Linn; or, Miss Temple's Wards. By AGNES GIBERNE. 3s. With Engravings, cloth gilt.

Hid in the Cevennes; or, The Mountain Refuge. A Story of a French Protestant Girl. With Illustrations. 3s. cloth, gilt.

Once upon a Time; or, The Boy's Book of Adventures. 3s. cloth.

Digitized by Google

2/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Sure Harvest. By Mrs. COOTE. A useful and interesting Story for Girls. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Three Christmas Eves. By the Author of "The Cottage on the Shore," etc. Illustrated. 2s. 6d. cloth gilt.

Elliott Malcolm's Chronicle. The Story of a Scotch Lassie. With Engravings. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.
An excellent gift-book for servants.

Angel Meadow. By the Author of "Field Court." Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Boys will be Boys. By GEORGE E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

Alfred Arnold's Choice, and what Came of it. A Tale of Factory Life. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Elsie's Footprints; or, Jesus your Life, and your Life for Jesus. By Mrs. LUCAS SHADWELL. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

The Moth and the Candle; or, Lucy Woodville's Temptation. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Old Anthony's Secret. By SARAH DOUDNEY. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

An Old Sailor's Story. By GEORGE E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

Reduced from "The Sure Harvest."

The Master's Service. A Practical Guide for Girls. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Ivy's Armour. With Engravings. Illustrating Eph. vi. 13-17. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Free to Serve. A Young Servant's Story. By E. R. GARRATT. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Golden Sheaves; or, Grace Reynold's Work for the Master. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Children's Daily Bread. Picture, Text, and Verse for every Day. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Olive's Story; or, Life at Ravenscliffe. By Mrs. O. F. WALTON. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Digitized by Google

2/- ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Secret Room. By Miss POCKLINGTON. Illustrated. 2s. cloth boards.
An unusually well-written story of the time of Queen Mary. The tale is well conceived and the little book is full of valuable reading.

In London Fields. A Story of the Lights and Shadows of a Child's Life. By EGLANTON THORNE. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.
A simple, unpretending story of a child's experiences in the East of London.

Reduced from "In London Fields."

Hester Lennox; or, Seeking a Life Motto. By HOWE BENNING, Author of "Quiet Corners," etc. With Illustrations. An interesting book for thoughtful Girls. 2s. cloth.

Drierstock. A Tale of Mission Work on the American Frontier. 2s. cloth.

God's Gifts to Two; or, Margaret Redfern's Discipline. 2s. cloth.

Paul Harvard's Campaign. Illustrated. 2s. cloth.

Great Voyagers. Their Adventures and Discoveries. 2s. cloth.

Hampered. A Tale of American Family Life. By Mrs. A. K. DUNNING. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.
Showing how the cares and temptations of life hamper a family, and how best overcome.

Polly's Petition. By Mrs. CLARKE, Author of "Jenny's Corner," etc. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.

The Day after To-morrow. By Mrs. PROSSER. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth.

Little Wavie, the Foundling of Glenderg. By CRONA TEMPLE. 2s. cloth.

Sunday Pictures for the Little Ones. With Eighty-four Coloured Pictures. 2s. cloth gilt.

City Sparrows, and who cared for them. By RUTH LYNN. 2s. cloth.

Clarice Egerton's Life Story. By A. LYSTER. 2s. cloth.

Bible Picture Stories. Full of Coloured Pictures. 2s. cloth gilt.

Digitized by Google

1/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Brydges. By Mrs. DISNEY. Illustrated. Cloth boards, 1s. 6d.

Led into Light. By LUCY TAYLOR. With Illustrations. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

Underneath the Surface. A Sark Story. By LOUISA DOBREE. 1s. 6d. cloth.

The Old Endeavour. By the Author of "John Denton," etc. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Penfold. A Story of the Flower Mission. By RUTH LYNN. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Quality Fogg's Old Ledger. By Mrs. PROSSER. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Ralph Trulock's Christmas Roses. By ANNETTE LYSTER. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Rides Out and About; or, Adventures in Australia. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Reduced from "The Brydges."

DAILY TEXT BOOKS.

Pearls from Deep Waters. Texts for every Morning and Evening for a Month. Printed in Colours. 1s.

Flowers from the King's Garden. Gathered for the Delight of the King's Children at Morn and Eventide. Texts for a Month. 1s.

White as Snow. A Text and a Meditation for each Day of the Month. By LADY HOPE, of Carriden. Printed in Colour, with Floral Designs. 1s.

The Threefold Cord. Precept, Promise, and Prayer for every Day in the Month. Improved Edition. Printed in Violet Ink. 6d.

Watchwords for the Campaign; or, The Christian Soldier's Manual. Compiled, and Illustrated with Original Verse for each Day for a Year, by M. M. POLLARD. 1s.

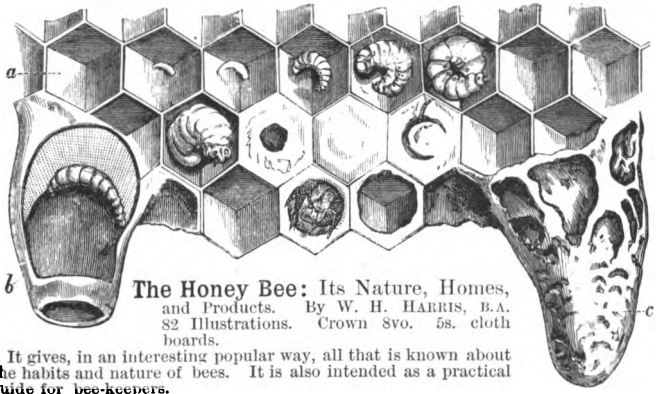
The Evening and the Morning. An Illuminated Diary. With Spaces for Memorial Entries, etc. In Gold and Colours. 1s. boards, red edges.

Things Touching the King. A Selection of Texts arranged for a Year. Neatly printed in Coloured Ink. 1s. 4d.

Children's Daily Bread. A Picture, a Text, and a Verse for every Day of the Year. Handsomely bound. 2s. 6d.

Digitized by Google

SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY.



The Honey Bee: Its Nature, Homes, and Products. By W. H. HARRIS, B.A. 82 Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 5s. cloth boards.

It gives, in an interesting popular way, all that is known about the habits and nature of bees. It is also intended as a practical guide for bee-keepers.

Electricity and its Uses. By JOHN MUNRO, of the Society of Telegraph Engineers and Electricians. With Engravings. 3s. 6d. cloth.

"We have here a popular but clear and correct account of electrical science in all its various branches. A work of this kind was greatly needed."—*Journal of Science.*

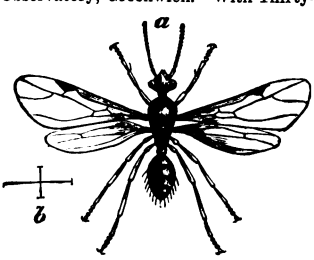
"The work is extremely well got up, and the diagrams are far above the average."—*Schoolmaster.*

The Chain of Life in Geological Time. A Sketch of the Origin and Succession of Animals and Plants. By J. W. DAWSON, LL.D., F.R.S., F.S.S., etc. With numerous Illustrations. 6s. 6d. cloth boards.

CONTENTS: Sources and Extent of our Knowledge—Beginning of Life—The Age of Invertebrates of the Sea—The Origin of Plant Life on the Land—The Appearance of Vertebrate Animals—The First Air-breathers—The Empire of the Great Reptiles—The First Forests of Modern Type—The Reign of Mammals—The Advent of Man, the Present and the Future.

The Midnight Sky. Familiar Notes on the Stars and Planets. By EDWIN DUNKIN, F.R.S., of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. With Thirty-two Star Maps and numerous other Illustrations. New and Revised Edition. Imperial 8vo. 7s. 6d. cloth, 9s. extra boards, with gilt edges.

"I find in it all the qualities of excellence as a book: lucid, perspicuous at a glance, concise, correct; completely fulfilling its purpose."—*Thomas Carlyle.*



Ants and their Ways. By the Rev. W. FARRAN WHITE, M.A., Vicar of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. With numerous Illustrations and a Complete List of Genera and Species of the British Ants. 5s. cloth.

"We can safely promise to all who have not read it, that a great treat is in store for them when they do."—*Standard.*

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Twilight Talks; or, Easy Lessons on Things Around us. By AGNES GIBERNE. With Illustrations. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

"The elements of physics simply and pleasingly put; it may be called a dose of physics with the physic taken out of it."—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Children's Flowers. The Friends of their Rambles and Play. With fine Floral Illustrations by GIACOMELLI and WHYMPER. 2s. 6d. cloth boards. A series of pleasantly written and instructive papers on the most familiar wild flowers.

Natural History Scrap Book. Part I. Animals. Part II. Birds, etc. Fine Illustrations. Oblong imperial 8vo, in coloured cover, 2s. each; complete in One Vol., gilt edges, 4s.

Digitized by Google

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE.

Five Little Birdies. By AGNES GIBERNE, Author of "Readings with the Little Ones," etc. With Illustrations by Robert Barnes. In Large Type. Quarto. 2s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Reduced from "Five Little Birdies."

Katie Brightside, and How she made the Best of Everything. By RUTH LAMB, Author of "Thoughtful Joe," etc. In Large Type, with Illustrations by Robert Barnes. Quarto. 2s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Thoughtful Joe, and How he gained his Name. By Mrs. RUTH LAMB. Illustrated by Robert Barnes. In Large Type. 2s. 6d. handsome cloth.

Digitized by Google

Coloured Picture Books for the Little Folks.

Story-land. By SYDNEY GREY. With Thirty-two Illustrations by ROBERT BARNES, engraved and printed in Colour by EDMUND EVANS. 4to. 6s. handsomely bound in coloured paper boards.

The stories in this volume are well within the understanding of children, and both interesting and instructive, while the very numerous illustrations make it a unique volume. No better gift-book for a child could be desired.

The Sweet Story of Old. A Sunday Book for the Little Ones. By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Jessica's First Prayer," etc. With Twelve Coloured Pictures by R. W. MADDOX. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

The story of the Life of Jesus, told so as to interest young children. For this purpose those parts of our Saviour's life and teaching which appeal most directly to children have been made most prominent. It is intended as a Sunday book, to be read to, or read by, the little ones. The twelve full-page coloured illustrations add greatly to the interest and attractiveness of the volume.

My Coloured Picture Story-Book. With Twenty-four full-coloured page Pictures, and forty Vignettes. Comprising Our Pretty Village—Little Antoine and the Bear—Rosa, the Little Cousin from India—The Blackbird's Nest. 4to. 4s. handsomely bound in cloth boards, full gilt.

My New Alphabet Book. With large Coloured Pictures. 6d. on paper, or 1s. mounted on canvas, untearable.

Harrison Weir's Pictures of Birds and other Family Pets. Comprising Pets of the Family—Feathered Friends—Frank and his Pets—Happy Families. Handsomely bound, with side in Gold and Colours. 4to. 5s. cloth boards.

Harrison Weir's Pictures of Animals. Comprising In the Woods—In the Fields—The Farm-yard—The Poultry-yard. With twenty-four large Coloured Plates. Large 4to. 5s. cloth boards, with Medallion on side.

Harrison Weir's Pictures of Wild Birds and Animals. Comprising Wild Rangers—Roving Birds—Lords of the Forest—Birds and Blossoms. With twenty-four large Coloured Plates. Large 4to. 5s. cloth boards, with Chromo Medallion on side.

The Toy Book Present. Comprising Willie and Mary's First Day at School—The Lost Lamb—Birds and Beasts—Alphabet House. 5s. handsomely bound.

The Toy Book Keepsake. Comprising My Birthday—Little Mouse and other Fables—The Lord's Prayer—Pilgrim Children. 5s. handsomely bound.

The Little Learner's Toy Book. Comprising The Little Learner's A B C Picture Book—The Little Learner's First Lessons in Reading—The Little Learner's Bible Pictures—The Little Learner's Home Pictures. 4to. 4s. handsomely bound, gilt edges.

Bible Stories and Pictures. Comprising The Story of Joseph—Stories from the Parables—The Story of Samuel—The Prodigal Son. A greatly improved series of Toy Books. With simple letterpress in large type. 4s. handsomely bound, cloth boards, gilt edges.

Little Dot and her Friends. Comprising Little Dot's Daisies—Story of Jack and Nell; or, The Little Helpers—Story of Little Pippin; or, Under the Apple-Tree—The Little Lamb. 4s. cloth boards, gilt edges.

The Town and Country Toy Book. Comprising A Visit to the Tower—The Seaside Holiday—Mother's Right Hand—Charlie's Summer in the Country. 4s. in handsome boards, with Medallion on side, gilt.

The Toy Book of Birds and Beasts. Comprising Domestic Animals—Wild Animals—Domestic Birds—Wild Birds. With twenty-four Coloured Pictures from Drawings by Harrison Weir. 4to. 4s. gilt edges.

Digitized by Google

NEW ILLUSTRATED STORY BOOKS.

THE "SUNFLOWERS" SERIES.

A series of books intended for adults rather than children. In this series an attempt will be made to supply books which shall not only interest as well-written stories that afford studies of character and descriptions of events and scenes likely to rivet the attention, but which shall also stimulate serious thought, and develop the better nature of those who shall read them.

Sunflowers. A Story of To-day. By G. C. GEDGE. With Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth.

Carola. By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Jessica's First Prayer," etc. With Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

Lenore Annandale's Story. By E. EVERETT GREEN, Author of "Paul Harvard's Campaign," etc. With Five Illustrations by WHYMPER. Crown 8vo. Cloth boards, 5s.

The Doctor's Experiment. By the Author of "Under Fire," etc. With Illustrations. 5s. cloth gilt.

A story of schoolboy life, full of incident.

Luther and Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz. A Historic-Biographical Tale. Given in English by JULIE SUTTER. With Portraits. Crown 8vo. 5s. cloth boards.

Boy and Man: A Story for Old and Young. With numerous Illustrations by FRENCH. 4s. Imperial 16mo. Cloth gilt.

Straight to the Mark. A Story for Old and Young. By the Rev. T. S. MILLINGTON, M.A., Author of "Boy and Man," etc. Illustrations. 5s. Imperial 16mo. Gilt edges.

Reduced from "Lenore Annandale's Story."

Within Sea Walls; or, How the Dutch kept the Faith. By ELIZABETH H. WALSHE and GEO. E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. A most interesting historical tale. 4s. 6d. cloth gilt.

Digitized by Google

3/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

Saxby: A Tale of the Commonwealth Time. By EMMA LESLIE. Illustrated. Cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

An interesting historical tale.

Wind and Wave fulfilling His Word. A Story of the Siege of Leyden, 1574. By HARRIETTE E. BURCH. With Engravings. 3s. 6d. cloth gilt.

A very good historical story.

Dearer than Life. A Story of the Times of Wycliffe. By EMMA LESLIE, Author of "At the Sign of the Blue Boar," "Saxby," etc. With Illustrations. Imperial 16mo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Apples and Oranges: Familiar Talks with Children on Fruits. By Mrs. DYSON, author of "Children's Flowers," etc. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Seven Steps Upward. By M. E. ROPES and SALEM HALL. With Seven Illustrations. Cloth boards, gilt edges, 3s. 6d. A series of tales for young people by two well-known writers.

Ellen Tremaine; or, The Poem without an Ending. By MARIANNE FILLEUL. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

An interesting story of life in a West Country fishing village, and of adventures on the ocean and in Australia.

Reduced from "Wind and Wave fulfilling His Word."

4/- EACH.

Lost in Egypt. A Story from Life. By Miss M. L. WHATELY. 4s. cloth gilt.

Children of India. Written for the Children of England by one of their Friends. With Illustrations and Map. 4s. gilt edges.

Under Fire; being the Story of a Boy's Battles against Himself and other Enemies. Illustrated. 4s. gilt edges.

3/- EACH.

Through the Linn; or, Miss Temple's Wards. By AGNES GIBERNE. 3s. With Engravings, cloth gilt.

Hid in the Cevennes; or, The Mountain Refuge. A Story of a French Protestant Girl. With Illustrations. 3s. cloth, gilt.

Once upon a Time; or, The Boy's Book of Adventures. 3s. cloth.

Digitized by Google

2/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Sure Harvest. By Mrs. COOTE. A useful and interesting Story for Girls. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Three Christmas Eves. By the Author of "The Cottage on the Shore," etc. Illustrated. 2s. 6d. cloth gilt.

Elliott Malcolm's Chronicle. The Story of a Scotch Lassie. With Engravings. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.
An excellent gift-book for servants.

Angel Meadow. By the Author of "Field Court." Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Boys will be Boys. By GEORGE E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

Alfred Arnold's Choice, and what Came of it. A Tale of Factory Life. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Elsie's Footprints; or, Jesus your Life, and your Life for Jesus. By Mrs. LUCAS SHADWELL. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

The Moth and the Candle; or, Lucy Woodville's Temptation. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Old Anthony's Secret. By SARAH DOUDNEY. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

An Old Sailor's Story. By GEORGE E. SARGENT. With Illustrations. 2s. 6d. cloth boards.

Reduced from "The Sure Harvest."

The Master's Service. A Practical Guide for Girls. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Ivy's Armour. With Engravings. Illustrating Eph. vi. 13-17. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Free to Serve. A Young Servant's Story. By E. R. GARRATT. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Golden Sheaves; or, Grace Reynold's Work for the Master. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Children's Daily Bread. Picture, Text, and Verse for every Day. 2s. 6d. cloth.

Olive's Story; or, Life at Ravenscliffe. By Mrs. O. F. WALTON. 2s. 6d. cloth.

2/- ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Secret Room. By Miss POCKLINGTON. Illustrated. 2s. cloth boards.
An unusually well-written story of the time of Queen Mary. The tale is well conceived and the little book is full of valuable reading.

In London Fields. A Story of the Lights and Shadows of a Child's Life. By EGLANTON THORNE. With Engravings. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.
A simple, unpretending story of a child's experiences in the East of London.

Reduced from "In London Fields."

Hester Lennox; or, Seeking a Life Motto. By HOWE BENNING, Author of "Quiet Corners," etc. With Illustrations. An interesting book for thoughtful Girls. 2s. cloth.

Drierstock. A Tale of Mission Work on the American Frontier. 2s. cloth.

God's Gifts to Two; or, Margaret Redfern's Discipline. 2s. cloth.

Paul Harvard's Campaign. Illustrated. 2s. cloth.

Great Voyagers. Their Adventures and Discoveries. 2s. cloth.

Hampered. A Tale of American Family Life. By Mrs. A. K. DUNNING. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.
Showing how the cares and temptations of life hamper a family, and how best overcome.

Polly's Petition. By Mrs. CLARKE, Author of "Jenny's Corner," etc. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth boards.

The Day after To-morrow. By Mrs. PROSSER. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 2s. cloth.

Little Wavie, the Foundling of Glenderg. By CRONA TEMPLE. 2s. cloth.

Sunday Pictures for the Little Ones. With Eighty-four Coloured Pictures. 2s. cloth gilt.

City Sparrows, and who cared for them. By RUTH LYNN. 2s. cloth.

Clarice Egerton's Life Story. By A. LYSTER. 2s. cloth.

Bible Picture Stories. Full of Coloured Pictures. 2s. cloth gilt.

Digitized by Google

1/6 ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

The Brydges. By Mrs. DISNEY. Illustrated. Cloth boards, 1s. 6d.

Led into Light. By LUCY TAYLOR. With Illustrations. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

Underneath the Surface. A Sark Story. By LOUISA DOBREE. 1s. 6d. cloth.

The Old Endeavour. By the Author of "John Denton," etc. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Penfold. A Story of the Flower Mission. By RUTH LYNN. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Quality Fogg's Old Ledger. By Mrs. PROSSER. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Ralph Trulock's Christmas Roses. By ANNETTE LYSTER. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Rides Out and About; or, Adventures in Australia. 1s. 6d. cloth.

Reduced from "The Brydges."

DAILY TEXT BOOKS.

Pearls from Deep Waters. Texts for every Morning and Evening for a Month. Printed in Colours. 1s.

Flowers from the King's Garden. Gathered for the Delight of the King's Children at Morn and Eventide. Texts for a Month. 1s.

White as Snow. A Text and a Meditation for each Day of the Month. By LADY HOPE, of Carriden. Printed in Colour, with Floral Designs. 1s.

The Threefold Cord. Precept, Promise, and Prayer for every Day in the Month. Improved Edition. Printed in Violet Ink. 6d.

Watchwords for the Campaign; or, The Christian Soldier's Manual. Compiled, and Illustrated with Original Verse for each Day for a Year, by M. M. POLLARD. 1s.

The Evening and the Morning. An Illuminated Diary. With Spaces for Memorial Entries, etc. In Gold and Colours. 1s. boards, red edges.

Things Touching the King. A Selection of Texts arranged for a Year. Neatly printed in Coloured Ink. 1s. 4d.

Children's Daily Bread. A Picture, a Text, and a Verse for every Day of the Year. Handsomely bound. 2s. 6d.

Digitized by Google

SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY.

The Honey Bee: Its Nature, Homes, and Products. By W. H. HARRIS, B.A. 82 Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 5s. cloth boards.

It gives, in an interesting popular way, all that is known about the habits and nature of bees. It is also intended as a practical guide for bee-keepers.

Electricity and its Uses. By JOHN MUNRO, of the Society of Telegraph Engineers and Electricians. With Engravings. 3s. 6d. cloth.

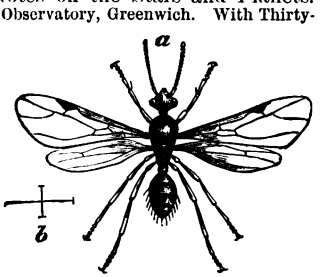
"We have here a popular but clear and correct account of electrical science in all its various branches. A work of this kind was greatly needed."—*Journal of Science.*

"The work is extremely well got up, and the diagrams are far above the average." *Schoolmaster.*

The Chain of Life in Geological Time. A Sketch of the Origin and Succession of Animals and Plants. By J. W. DAWSON, LL.D., F.R.S., F.S.S., etc. With numerous Illustrations. 6s. 6d. cloth boards.

CONTENTS: Sources and Extent of our Knowledge—Beginning of Life—The Age of Invertebrates of the Sea—The Origin of Plant Life on the Land—The Appearance of Vertebrate Animals—The First Air-breathers—The Empire of the Great Reptiles—The First Forests of Modern Type—The Reign of Mammals—The Advent of Man, the Present and the Future.

The Midnight Sky. Familiar Notes on the Stars and Planets. By EDWIN DUNKIN, F.R.S., of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. With Thirty-two Star Maps and numerous other Illustrations. New and Revised Edition. Imperial 8vo. 7s. 6d. cloth, 9s. extra boards, with gilt edges.



"I find in it all the qualities of excellence as a book: lucid, perspicuous at a glance, concise, correct; completely fulfilling its purpose."—*Thomas Carlyle.*

Ants and their Ways. By the Rev. W. FARRAN WHITE, M.A., Vicar of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. With numerous Illustrations and a Complete List of Genera and Species of the British Ants. 5s. cloth.

"We can safely promise to all who have not read it, that a great treat is in store for them when they do."—*Standard.*

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Twilight Talks; or, Easy Lessons on Things Around us. By AGNES GIBERNE. With Illustrations. 1s. 6d. cloth boards.

"The elements of physics simply and pleasingly put; it may be called a dose of physics with the physic taken out of it."—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Children's Flowers. The Friends of their Rambles and Play. With fine Floral Illustrations by GIACOMELLI and WHYMPER. 2s. 6d. cloth boards. A series of pleasantly written and instructive papers on the most familiar wild flowers.

Natural History Scrap Book. Part I. Animals. Part II. Birds, etc. Fine Illustrations. Oblong imperial 8vo, in coloured cover, 2s. each; complete in One Vol., gilt edges, 4s.

Digitized by Google

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE.

Five Little Birdies. By AGNES GIBERNE, Author of "Readings with the Little Ones," etc. With Illustrations by Robert Barnes. In Large Type. Quarto. 2s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Reduced from "Five Little Birdies."

Katie Brightside, and How she made the Best of Everything. By RUTH LAMB, Author of "Thoughtful Joe," etc. In Large Type, with Illustrations by Robert Barnes. Quarto. 2s. 6d. cloth boards, gilt edges.

Thoughtful Joe, and How he gained his Name. By Mrs. RUTH LAMB. Illustrated by Robert Barnes. In Large Type. 2s. 6d. handsome cloth.

Digitized by Google

Coloured Picture Books for the Little Folks.

Story-land. By SYDNEY GREY. With Thirty-two Illustrations by ROBERT BARNES, engraved and printed in Colour by EDMUND EVANS. 4to. 6s. handsomely bound in coloured paper boards.

The stories in this volume are well within the understanding of children, and both interesting and instructive, while the very numerous illustrations make it a unique volume. No better gift-book for a child could be desired.

The Sweet Story of Old. A Sunday Book for the Little Ones. By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Jessica's First Prayer," etc. With Twelve Coloured Pictures by R. W. MADDOX. 3s. 6d. cloth boards.

The story of the Life of Jesus, told so as to interest young children. For this purpose those parts of our Saviour's life and teaching which appeal most directly to children have been made most prominent. It is intended as a Sunday book, to be read to, or read by, the little ones. The twelve full-page coloured illustrations add greatly to the interest and attractiveness of the volume.

My Coloured Picture Story-Book. With Twenty-four full-coloured page Pictures, and forty Vignettes. Comprising Our Pretty Village—Little Antoine and the Bear—Rosa, the Little Cousin from India—The Blackbird's Nest. 4to. 4s. handsomely bound in cloth boards, full gilt.

My New Alphabet Book. With large Coloured Pictures. 6d. on paper, or 1s. mounted on canvas, untearable.

Harrison Weir's Pictures of Birds and other Family Pets. Comprising Pets of the Family—Feathered Friends—Frank and his Pets—Happy Families. Handsomely bound, with side in Gold and Colours. 4to. 5s. cloth boards.

Harrison Weir's Pictures of Animals. Comprising In the Woods—In the Fields—The Farm-yard—The Poultry-yard. With twenty-four large Coloured Plates. Large 4to. 5s. cloth boards, with Medallion on side.

Harrison Weir's Pictures of Wild Birds and Animals. Comprising Wild Rangers—Roving Birds—Lords of the Forest—Birds and Blossoms. With twenty-four large Coloured Plates. Large 4to. 5s. cloth boards, with Chromo Medallion on side.

The Toy Book Present. Comprising Willie and Mary's First Day at School—The Lost Lamb—Birds and Beasts—Alphabet House. 5s. handsomely bound.

The Toy Book Keepsake. Comprising My Birthday—Little Mouse and other Fables—The Lord's Prayer—Pilgrim Children. 5s. handsomely bound.

The Little Learner's Toy Book. Comprising The Little Learner's A B C Picture Book—The Little Learner's First Lessons in Reading—The Little Learner's Bible Pictures—The Little Learner's Home Pictures. 4to. 4s. handsomely bound, gilt edges.

Bible Stories and Pictures. Comprising The Story of Joseph—Stories from the Parables—The Story of Samuel—The Prodigal Son. A greatly improved series of Toy Books. With simple letterpress in large type. 4s. handsomely bound, cloth boards, gilt edges.

Little Dot and her Friends. Comprising Little Dot's Daisies—Story of Jack and Nell; or, The Little Helpers—Story of Little Pippin; or, Under the Apple-Tree—The Little Lamb. 4s. cloth boards, gilt edges.

The Town and Country Toy Book. Comprising A Visit to the Tower—The Seaside Holiday—Mother's Right Hand—Charlie's Summer in the Country. 4s. in handsome boards, with Medallion on side, gilt.

The Toy Book of Birds and Beasts. Comprising Domestic Animals—Wild Animals—Domestic Birds—Wild Birds. With twenty-four Coloured Pictures from Drawings by Harrison Weir. 4to. 4s. gilt edges.

Digitized by Google

SHILLING ILLUSTRATED LARGE-TYPE BOOKS,

SPECIALLY SUITED FOR WORKING PEOPLE.

A full list of this series will be found in the Society's GENERAL CATALOGUE.

19. **The Wife's Secret.**
20. **Wives and their Husbands.** By MRS. GLADSTONE.
21. **Mrs. Warley's Lodger,** and other Stories. By Rev. C. COURTENAY.

Reduced from No. 34.

22. **The Lost Passenger.**
23. **A Tale of the Grampians.**
24. **Humphrey Pace.** By MRS. PROSSER.
25. **A Present Saviour.** By Rev. R. S. HUTTON, M.A.
26. **Milly's Trials and Triumphs.**
27. **My Wife did it.**
28. **How shall I go to God?** By Dr. BONAR.
29. **Old Blind Ned.** By M. E. BODDY.
30. **The Sunny Valley.**
31. **Golden, all Golden.**
32. **The Happy Resolve.**
33. **Little Ruby's Curl.**
34. **The Sparrow on the Housetop.**
35. **Precious Truths in Plain Words.**
36. **Ned Cantle, the Oracle.**
37. **The Lost Ten Pounds.**
38. **Honesty the best Policy,** and other Stories. By MARY E. ROPES.
39. **Mother's Blessing,** and other Stories.
40. **Sandy's Faith.** A Scotch Story.
41. **Fine-Weather Dick,** and other Sketches. By Miss C. W. LEAKEY.
42. **Mrs. Hastie's Comforters.**
43. **Comfort Cottage: Its Inmates and Friends.** By Mrs. WIGLEY.
44. **The Longest Way Round for the Shortest.** By Mrs. LAMB.
45. **Mahala, the Jewish Slave.**
46. **The Queen's Colours,** and other Sketches of a Soldier's Life.
47. **Make Hay while the Sun Shines,** and other Sketches.
48. **Rebecca the Peacemaker; or, Coals of Fire,** and other Narratives.
49. **Look on the Sunny Side.**
50. **John Rixon's Money Box.**
51. **Fighting an Omen; or, Happy is the Bride that the Sun Shines on.**
52. **The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain,** and other Stories.
53. **All Hands on Deck!** A Book for Seafarers.
54. **Old John Corbin's Spectacles.**
55. **Norah and her Kerry Cow.**
57. **The Master of Aynhoe.**
58. **The Bar of Iron, and the Conclusion of the Matter.** By the Rev. CHARLES B. TAYLER, M.A.

Digitized by Google

Shilling Books for the Young.

Each volume complete in itself, and Illustrated. 1s. *cloth boards.*
For Nos. 1 to 118 see General Catalogue.

From No. 149, "Darcy, the Young Acrobat."

119. **Pearl**; or, Lost and Found: and Tot, the Child Pilgrim.
120. **Pictures and Stories for the Young.** Upwards of Sixty Engravings.
121. **Our Honolulu Boys.** By Mrs. J. A. Owen.
122. **The Eldest of Seven.**
123. **Little Strokes Fell Great Oaks.**
124. **Charlie's Log.** A Story of Schoolboy Life.
125. **The Blind Boy of the Island.**
126. **Field Court**; or, Who Maketh Thee to Differ?
127. **Wonders under the Earth.** By JANE BESEMERES.
128. **Adventures of Two Brothers.** By G. E. SARGENT.
129. **My Golden Ship.** By M. E. ROPES.
130. **As Many as Touched Him.** By the Author of "It's all Real True," etc.
131. **Mistakes by the Way**; or, Ada's New Home.
132. **Bravely Borne**; or, Archie's Cross. By the Author of "Dick's Strength," etc.
133. **Margie's Gifts,** and How she Used them.
134. **A Bit of Holly.** With Illustrations.
135. **Pansy.** A Story for Little Girls.
136. **Next Door Neighbours.** By AGNES GIBERNE.
137. **Minatoo**; or, Little Frankie's Bearer. By Mrs. H. B. PAULL.
138. **Roving Robin.** By NELLIE HELLIS.
139. **Elinor Vincent's Discipline.**
140. **Bernard Kendal's Fortune.** By Mrs. RUTH LAMB.
141. **A Slip at Starting**; or, Johnny's First Place. By EMMA LESLIE.
142. **Some Folk in our Village.**
145. **Selim's Pilgrimage.** A Tale of Hindu Muhammadan Life.
146. **The Mirage of Life.** With Illustrations by JOHN TENNIEL.
147. **Milly's Mistakes, and What she** Learned by them.
148. **Joe Harman's Experiences.**
149. **Darcy, the Young Acrobat.**
150. **Margaret's Journal**; or, Steps Upward.
151. **True to his Vow.**
152. **Norah's Stronghold.** By Miss L. C. SILKE, Author of "Bravely Borne," etc.
153 **Prince and Page.** By MARY E. ROPES.
154. **Hugh Coverdale's Choice.**
155. **The Picture Reversed.**

Digitized by Google

Magazines for every Home.

Sixpence Monthly. One Penny Weekly.

THE

SUNDAY AT HOME.

THE FAMILY MAGAZINE
FOR
SABBATH READING.

Sixpence Monthly.

THE

LEISURE HOUR

THE FAMILY JOURNAL
OF
INSTRUCTION AND RECREATIO

Sixpence Monthly. One Penny Weekly.

THE

GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

A JOURNAL OF PURE, ENTERTAINING, AND USEFUL LITERATURE.

Sixpence Monthly. One Penny W

THE

BOY'S OWN PAPE

A JOURNAL OF PURE, INTERESTING, AND INSTRUCT READING.

One Penny Monthly.

THE

CHILD'S COMPANION

AND
JUVENILE INSTRUCTOR.
THE
ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE
FOR THE
LITTLE FOLKS.

ENLARGED TO TWELVE PAGES.

One Penny Monthly.

THE

COTTAGER & ARTISAN

THE
ILLUSTRATED MAGAZI
FOR
WORKING PEOPLE.

Fourpence Monthly.
One Halfpenny Weekly.

FRIENDLY GREETINGS.

ILLUSTRATED READINGS
FOR THE
PEOPLE.

One Penny Monthly New Series

THE

TRACT MAGAZINE

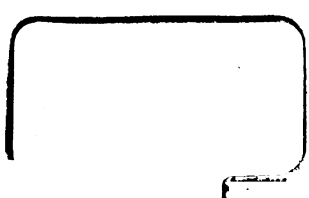
AND
CHRISTIAN MISCELLANY.
FOR HOME READING AND LOAN CIRCULATION.

Digitized by Google

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW.

Digitized by Google

Digitized By Google


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google